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New Statesman

2 May 1986 90p IR£1.34 US$1.50 By Air

. . . TO LOVE, HONOUR & OBEY

JOHN SWEENEY: Those Masonic judges
STUART HOWARD: Happy Birthday May Day
MISHA GLENNY: Waldheim waltzes home

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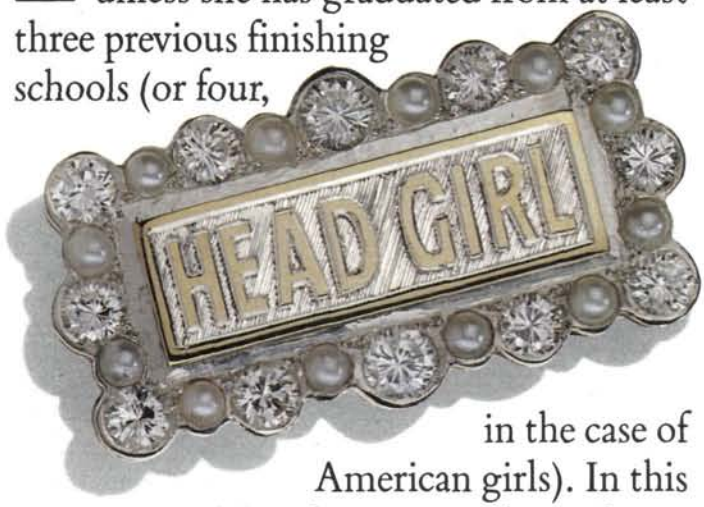
is the Institut Delacroix near Lausanne. No young lady is accepted as a pupil unless she has graduated from at least three previous finishing schools (or four,



in the case of American girls). In this picturesque lakeside setting, the girls are taught a surprisingly wide range of subjects. In addition to the usual accomplishments like deportment and flower-arranging, they are encouraged to master such skills as big-game fishing, aikido and improvising automatic weapons out of everyday kitchen equipment and old lipstick cases. The uniforms are all hand tailored by Crocker and Devenish of New Burlington Street, although the combat gear is made by the girls themselves in their needlework classes. The culinary arts are not neglected, of course, and each girl is expected to have a thorough knowledge of the more prestigious names in the field of wines and spirits. The only cider to appear on the curriculum is Merrydown. This cider is produced in limited quantities each year by a unique blending process, and each bottle bears the date of the vintage on its label. The apples used in the fermentation are all fine English apples like Bramleys and Cox's, rather than the bitter little cider apples used to make those brands which appeal to young ladies of a less refined sensibility. It is available in two subtly differing varieties; Merrydown Vintage and Merrydown Vintage Dry. Any discriminating off-licence should be prepared to sell you a bottle or two, even if you've never been to finishing school. In fact, most people enjoy it most after finishing work.

Merrydown. Cider for the few.

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New Statesman

Cover drawing: Steve Bell

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. . . which is proving embarrassingly inconvenient to Britain. GWYN PRINS steps in and offers some marriage guidance counselling 21

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Mary Chamberlain's article on community politics has been held over

NEXT WEEK

THE DATA PROTECTION ACT 1984

OPEN THE FILES

By the end of next week, everyone using a computer to store information about other people will be breaking the law if they have not set out in public what they do with computerised personal information. Next year, the contents of most of these computerised personal files will have to be shown to their subjects. In an extract from their new book, DUNCAN CAMPBELL and STEVE CONNOR explain how civil servants struggled for 20 years to stop Britons getting any sort of legal right to inspect their own files

LAGOS LAMENT

BEN OKRI returns to a Nigeria 'trapped in dust'

WHAT A PERFORMANCE

KENNETH REA investigates the state of performance art

A NEW LEFT FOR EUROPE

Democracy for Europe is being eroded in new ways which defy the boundaries of the nation-state. Italian Communist ACHILLE OCCHETTO supports the proposal of German Social Democrat Peter Glotz for a Manifesto of the European Left

New Statesman

Vol 111 No 2875 2 May 1986

Windscale, Three Mile Island — and Chernobyl

AS THE TRUTH about the world's worst nuclear reactor accident trickles out of the Soviet Union, coupled with the news from India, it is time to remind ourselves what some of those directly involved in the campaign for nuclear power have said in the past.

Take the Ukraine's Minister of Power, Vitali Sklydarov, for a start. In February he dismissed fears about the wisdom of siting nuclear reactors near centres of population like Chernobyl. 'The odds of a meltdown are one in 10,000 years', he said. 'The plants have safe and reliable controls that are protected from any breakdown with three safety lines.'

Or take the chairperson of the Central Electricity Generating Board, Lord Walter Marshall of Goring, whose nuclear fanaticism Mrs Thatcher so much admires. In 1983 he said: 'We do not expect big reactor accidents to happen, the chance of their happening is extremely remote.' Or take the author of these remarks last weekend: 'The Soviet Union, where I've been last week, is going to double its nuclear energy presence . . . In the next century countries with very big nuclear industries are going to have very big advantages. I would like Britain to have those advantages.' Even as Energy Secretary Peter Walker was speaking, the poisonous radioactive clouds from the burning hulk of Chernobyl were spreading over Poland and Scandinavia.

The nuclear industry and the Thatcher government have already begun the propaganda war to try to assure us that it couldn't happen here. Of course it could. Nuclear power is a technology which in normal operation demands the safe containment of huge quantities of lethal radioactivity. Should even a small proportion escape to the environment, you are in big trouble.

This is true of *any* nuclear reactor, be it the light-water-cooled, graphite-moderated type at Chernobyl, the Magnox or advanced gas-cooled designs already in operation in Britain, or the pressurised water plant planned for Sizewell in Suffolk. Though experts may dispute the relative risks of various designs, *they all have the same ultimate potential for catastrophe.*

Even after Chernobyl, reactor safety is not the only conclusive reason for opposing nuclear power. Its political and social implications, the way it increased the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation and the availability of cheaper alternative energy are themselves convincing enough arguments. After Chernobyl, Labour, above all, must come off the fence on which its environment spokesperson John Cunningham (with his Sellafield constituency interests) has the party currently impaled and should unhesitatingly embrace the motion passed at last year's Labour Conference, calling for the phasing out of Britain's nuclear power programme. The two new reactors about to come on stream, Torness and Heysham, should be mothballed.

THE CHERNOBYL reactor design, like Britain's first generation Magnox power stations, is made for the production of plutonium for nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union's other major nuclear disaster at Kyshtym 30 years ago was due to an explosion at a military nuclear waste site. Britain's most serious accident at Windscale in 1957 happened in a military plutonium production reactor.

Nuclear power has a Siamese twin relationship with nuclear

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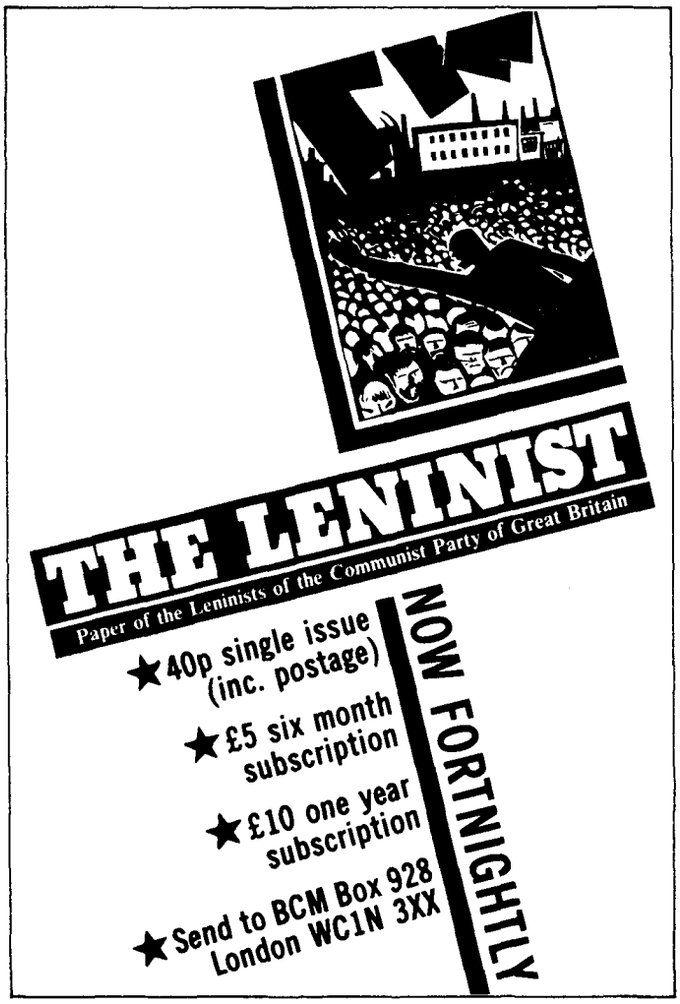
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weapons. For years we have been assured and reassured by the government and the nuclear industry that no plutonium from the civil reactors run by the electricity boards has ever been put in nuclear warheads. John Moore said so quite explicitly when he was Energy Under Secretary in 1983. John Baker, a senior CEGB board member, said so repeatedly in his evidence to the Sizewell inquiry.

When that evidence was challenged by CND, who quoted the former CEGB chairperson, the late lord Hinton, describing it as 'bloody lies', Baker stuck doggedly to his version of the truth, insisting that the CEGB were not 'corporate liars'.

But CND and Lord Hinton were right. Lord Marshall, no less, admitted in a recent TV interview that some civil plutonium had in fact 'gone into military stockpile'. Since then the government has also changed its tune, with Mrs Thatcher telling Labour MP Chris Smith that no civil plutonium has been transferred to defence use 'during the period of this administration'. She refused to answer for previous administrations.

The detail of what has happened with civil plutonium is still to be cleared up, but the key point cannot now be evaded. The government and the nuclear industry have for years been telling us lies about its military uses. In doing so they have actively undermined the fragile international effort aimed at containing the spread of nuclear weapons. □

Ronnie and Maggie get their nerve gas

SINCE THE MID-1970s the US Pentagon has been fighting to get money out of Congress to produce a new generation of chemical warfare weapons. It was the only major new weapons system that the Reagan Administration and Caspar Weinberger failed to get through in its first term.

Now the decision to go ahead with the production of 'binary' nerve gas has been sneaked past NATO with the active support of the Thatcher government. As we reported last year (*NS* 11 January), Mrs Thatcher's preference would have been for the British government itself to get back, after an interval of twenty years, into the chemical weapons production game. But her fallback position was that we should encourage the Americans to produce a yet deadlier system than their current 'unitary' nerve and mustard gas stockpile. The Congress in the end attached a condition to the nerve gas funding that it was dependent on the President certifying that NATO had adopted the 'modernisation' of the US chemical 'deterrent' as a NATO 'force goal'. This cataclysmic decision went through a routine meeting of NATO ambassadors this week, without any serious political or strategic discussion and will simply be 'taken note of' when the NATO Council meets on 22 May. Quite apart from the moral repugnance that attaches to active British support for the production of an entirely new system of terrible mass destruction, there is no *military* justification for this further vicious twist in the international arms race. The current US stockpile of nerve and mustard gas is enough to wipe out the *entire* population of the world several thousand times over. If some mad logic of deterrence requires Pentagon and NATO planners to feel able to respond with nerve gas to some supposed Russian nerve gas attack, why do they need more than they already have?

You only need to 'modernise' a weapon of mass destruction if, at some yet deeper level of lunacy, you are contemplating the possibility of actually using it in some context of a contained war. The terrible extra quality of a 'binary' chemical weapon is that, until they are mixed, the two component gasses are not lethal. That makes it infinitely easier for the military mind to fit its deployment into standard exercise scenarios, which is one appalling step closer to accepting that they might actually be used. □

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All photos: UPP

Throwing the book at (left to right): Lord Templeman, Sir John Arnold and Sir John Balcombe

TOP JUDGES LISTED IN MASONIC YEAR BOOK

The *New Statesman* has obtained a copy of the current Masonic Year Book which contains incontrovertible evidence that the secretive Brotherhood is well represented among the top ranks of the judiciary. JOHN SWEENEY reports

THE YEAR BOOK, which is only available to senior freemasons, lists the names of 42 members of the Craft who are serving or have served on the Bench.

The masonic judges include Lord Templeman, one of the law lords who recently said no to the GLC giving away £25 million to voluntary bodies, and a knot of judges in the Family Division of the High Court, such as Sir John Arnold, President of the Family Division, Sir John Latey, the most senior High Court judge, Mr Justice Reeve, and Sir John Balcombe, who was promoted from the Family Division to the Appeal Court.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, who says he isn't a mason, told the *New Statesman*: 'Freemasonry is a legal activity and there is no evidence that membership of the freemasons affects the way in which an individual performs his judicial function'.

But Sally Hughes of the Legal Action Group, although she agrees that there's no evidence, reports unease and apprehension felt by non-masons, particularly by women seeking divorces from masons. 'Even if freemasonry in fact has no influence, citizens should be given no grounds for suspecting partiality in judges,' she says.

Only this week, concern about the way judges are appointed was expressed by Peter Scott, QC, who is expected to be the next chairperson of the Bar. He said there are 'some disturbing elements in the present system which need to be looked at'. He criticised the concentration of power to appoint judges in 'one pair of hands' — the Lord Chancellor's — and proposed a Judicial Appointments Board. At present the Lord Chancellor takes advice informally, and old boy networks, such as public schools, universities and freemasonry, can operate — in no sense corruptly — to disadvantage women and others.

Another question-mark over the propriety of masonic law-enforcers has been raised in an unlikely quarter. Last year a Metropolitan Police guidance note recommended that police officers should not join or should renounce the freemasons because it could bring into question their impartiality.

Exclusive

The Met's guidance said: 'There is the oddness of the initiation ceremony itself, with its strange rites which smack, to some, of immaturity,being reminiscent of the secret societies of boyhood. There is some oddness, too, about the requirement for freemasons to respect social distinctions and the status quo to such an extent as to sustain the notion that "while some must rule, others must obey and cheerfully accept their inferior positions"'.

The guidance concluded that all these factors worked against colleagues and citizens accepting an officer who is a freemason as someone 'on whose fairness it is possible to rely always and unquestionably'.

The full list adds considerably to the information in Stephen Knight's book, *The Brotherhood*, published in 1983. Knight was unable to establish whether Lord Templeman, who didn't reply to his letter, was a mason.

A similar letter to Lord Lane was opened and returned without comment, although Lane's predecessor as Lord Chief Justice, Lord Widgery, 'was an extremely enthusiastic freemason of grand rank, holding office as Past Senior Grand Warden'. He also got a frosty brush-off from Master of the Rolls Sir John Donaldson: 'I do not really feel the question of whether or not I am a mason is a matter of public concern. It is a totally irrelevant consideration in our work.'

Serving and past judges in the 1985/86 Masonic Year Book:

Jack S. Abdela, circuit judge; Marcus J. Anwyl-Davies, circuit judge; Sir John Arnold, President of the Family Division; Sir John Balcombe, Lord Justice of Appeal; Norman J. L. Brodrick, circuit judge, retired; Francis H. Cassels, circuit judge, retired; Mr Registrar J. V. Davies; Sir Maurice Drake, High Court; Sir Edward Eveleigh, Lord Justice of Appeal, retired; the late Sir Neville Faulks, Family Division; John A. Finlay, circuit judge; Sir Douglas G. H. Frank, President of the Lands Tribunal; Desmond G. F. Franks, circuit judge; Archibald G. Friend, circuit judge, retired; Brian J. F. Galpin, circuit judge; Edward B. Gibbens, circuit judge, retired; Michael B. Goodman, circuit judge; Sir Patrick Graham, Chancery; Rowe Harding, circuit judge, retired; John E. Jones, circuit judge, retired; Alexander D. Karmel, circuit judge, retired; Myer A. B. King-Hamilton, circuit judge, retired; Sir John Latey, Family Division; Sir John Leonard, QB; Gilbert F. Leslie, circuit judge, retired; Sir Rudolph Lyons, circuit judge, retired; Eric B. McLellan, circuit judge; Sir Trevor Reeve, Family Division; John C. Rutter, circuit judge; Sir Barry Sheen, QB; Sir Norman Skelhorn, ex-DPP; Peter M. J. Slot, circuit judge; Edgar D. Smith, circuit judge, retired; Sir William W. Stabb, circuit judge, retired; James W. Stanfield, circuit judge; Sir John Stocker, QB; Sir Hilary Talbot, QB; Lord Templeman; Alan S. Trapnell, circuit judge, retired; Lawrence J. Verney, circuit judge; Richard W. Vick, circuit judge; Felix Waley, circuit judge. ●

NCCL: a dire prophecy fulfilled

EIGHTEEN MONTHS ago we warned that Livingstone-bashing could have the 'discreditable' (but to Thatcherites far from unwelcome) side-effect of damaging the National Council for Civil Liberties just as its workload rises 'much of it in response to Conservative measures' (NS 7 *September 1984).*

And so it's happened, with the House of Lords judgement stopping the GLC's 'death-bed' grants. Stripped of £120,000 the GLC had intended as top-up to membership subscriptions and other self-generated revenue, NCCL launched a £30,000 Emergency Appeal last Sunday (27 April) to try to salvage something.

Three GLC-funded core staff will now have *to go. The appeal is to try to save three further people threatened by a prospective £53,000 NCCL deficit. If* their *jobs aren't saved, NCCL faces an overall core-staff drop by July from 16 to 10. And NCCL staff have never been less than over-stretched.*

Last weekend's agm, which raised an initial £1,000 from members, heard NCCL general secretary Sarah Spencer detect a shift over the last decade towards 'sympathy' for the idea of incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into British law (NS *6 December 1985). NCCL plan a big conference on the subject for early 1987.*

Motions approved this year included condemnation of the suspensions of normal rights that followed use of national security procedures in last week's deportation of 22 Libyan students ('moral panic'), continuing criticism of the Public Order Bill, and alarm over censorship. (Only the day after the agm it was learned that distributors of the 30,000 circulation monthly Gay Times *refused to handle the May issue without a 'wrap-around', for fear police would think the cover indecent.)*

Compared with the heat generated at last year's NCCL agm over then general secretary Larry Gostin's efforts to 'redress' the balance of individual v collective rights (in the context of the miners' strike) this year's was an uncontroversial two-day session.

In a timely vote, two 'out' gays were among the freshly elected NCCL executive committee members: Labour MP Chris Smith and Campaign for Homosexual Equality treasurer Nick Billingham.

Andrew Lumsden

Donations urgently required to: NCCL, 21 Tabard St, London SE1 4LA.

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Militant's eroded power base faces electorate

IAN WILLIAMS offers a totally dispassionate guide to the electoral confusion in Liverpool. Will Militant's rising unpopularity and new whiffs of financial scandal mean Labour losing control in next week's local elections? Will the tendency's stranglehold ever be loosened?

DEREK HATTON and his fellow Militant leaders of Liverpool council had a brainwave for satisfying their Trotskyist hankering for 'mass' demonstrations at the Town Hall. They organised a civic reception last Friday for FA Cup finalists Liverpool and Everton. But Liverpool manager Kenny Dalglish — a non-Militant New Realist — refused to celebrate until *after* victory next Saturday. So did the crowds.

Militant's union support — previously the core of its power base — is also evaporating. Peter Lennard, convenor of the General and Municipal Branch No 80 (once second only to the notorious 'No 5' in loyalty), last week called on his 4,000 members to fight Militant tendency 'infiltration', 'some councillors' use of chauffeur-driven limousines', 'anomalies in the central unemployed register' and the use by councillors of 'police and bulldozers' to break industrial action by the Static Security Force (once regarded as Militant's private army).

'Tittle tattle'

On the other hand, *Militant* newspaper last week proved what a bad egg Lennard was by citing against him large chunks of the Labour Party's enquiry report which hitherto had been unsubstantiated 'gossip and tittle tattle'. Perhaps the unkindest cut of all was its accusation that Lennard went around the city in taxis giving out the 31,000 redundancy notices last year. He did — on their behalf.

The final straw for Lennard was the seconding of two members of his branch, Militant supporters, to special salaried positions to provide 'support' for school governors, or as he put it 'to prepare propaganda to go out to schools'. Symptomatic of the breakdown in relations is that striking GMB members have shut down the school meals service over unpaid back pay.

Equally damaging to election prospects is the possibility of a teachers' strike. While teachers in the rest of the country have already spent their back pay from last year's settlement, Liverpool teachers have yet to get a penny. The excuse was a backlog of work in the City Treasury but suspicions were that it was a punishment for the NUT's successful court action against the redundancies last year. Teachers have threatened to refuse to use their own transport between split sites for the reorganised comprehensives. They asked for taxis, since as they pointed out with heavy irony the council used them to distribute their redundancy notices last year.

Intimately connected with events in Liverpool is neighbouring Knowsley council where Derek Hatton is officially employed as a community development worker and many of whose councillors are in turn employed by Liverpool City. A further electoral problem for Hatton concerns reports in the local anti-Labour (and virulently anti-Militant) press. They allege that Merseyside's commercial branch (fraud squad) has sent a second report on Hatton to the Director of Public Prosecutions believed to be about expense claims for Continental journeys. There is also further trouble over Tony Beyga, PR man for a property development company who holidayed with Hatton in Tangiers shortly before Derek supported the controversial ASDA superstore development on land owned by Beyga's employer.

Electoral sums, and the hotseat man

While Knowsley is unshakeably Labour there's a possibility that Labour may lose control of Liverpool council. But the seats up next week were last contested during Labour's post-Falklands nadir in 1982, as compared with post-Fulham euphoria. It'd be ironic if the new sanitised Fulham Labour image were held to be proof of the appeal of Militant policies to 'the people of Liverpool'.

And at last: Labour's national HQ has appointed a full-time officer for Merseyside — the hottest seat in British politics. The poor sod is native Liverpudlian Peter Kilfoyle. A *second* officer will also be appointed, but won't be released by his union (TGWU) until after the 8 May elections to avoid sharing the blame for any possible defeat. ●

Women vindicated

THE YEAR-LONG battle by Dawn Corbett and Glenys Watt to prove that they have suffered sexual harassment working at Lothian Community Relations Council has ended in victory.

Last week the Council's management finally agreed with the womens' union, ASTMS, that the behaviour of the senior community relations officer, Mohammed Akram, had been 'unacceptable' and that he would be disciplined if the offence was repeated (NS 28 February).

Although there seems to have been some quibbling over definitions, the management has performed a sharp U-turn. Its handling of the dispute has not been exactly distinguished. The problems, according to one of the trade unionists involved, have been all too characteristic of management in the voluntary sector.

The Council's difficulties are still far from over. Next month it faces accusations of sex discrimination and unfair dismissal at an industrial tribunal from its former administrative officer, Dorothy Fall. And it's still awaiting the outcome of a special appraisal of is work carried out by the Commission for Racial Equality after complaints from local ethnic minority organisations.

Rob Edwards

Politics of Aids Round-up (5)

Fionnuala O Connor on Ulster's 'backwater'

Those self-same implacable voices now yelling 'Ulster Says No' screamed 'Save Ulster from Sodomy' only five years ago. But puritanism has had a long run in a society united solely in its prejudices. The matters 'reserved' to the competence of the old devolved Unionist-dominated Stormont parliament included, as of right and with deserved Westminster confidence that here Unionist and Nationalist would always agree, all questions of morality — ie matters sexual. Parity with England in the law on homosexual offences arrived only in 1982 — in spite of the Paisleyite Save Ulster brigade's strenuous efforts to retain the old statutory penalties of life imprisonment. The Catholic hierarchy communicated the same message to the would-be reformist British direct rulers more discreetly but with equal vehemence. In the face of this display of united community 'sensitivity' the Northern Ireland Office dragged the law into line only when forced to by a local gay rights campaigner's victorious case in the Euro Court at Strasbourg.

Some argue that Aids is here, but incubating. Others maintain that to some degree the very narrowness of this society and the inhibitions imposed on gay social life have reduced the spread of the virus. Only one person is known to have died of Aids in Northern Ireland. A young gay man who had lived out of the country for years, and came home to die, he wasn't known in Belfast's small gay world. 'I think that very fact has been important,' says a Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (NIGRA) veteran. 'It's as though we haven't had a death at all. When I read the obituaries of Aids victims in London and New York, and sometimes apparently disproportionately of gay activists, it's a different world. From here London sounds fairly grim.'

That death in Belfast's largest hospital last year did however bring some scare headlines. Loose medical statements made identification of the victim possible in this small community, and there was a brief outburst of panic among hospital workers. Gay campaigners are no more disposed here than anywhere else to praise official attitudes, but do say the DHSS has been 'sensitive enough, and sensible' in its approach. The trade union most involved, National Union of Public Employees, worked well with NIGRA to ward off prejudices. Cara-Friend, the NI information and befriending service, has held a series of discreet public meetings with DHSS funding and help to explore the blood transfusion question, and to provide a platform — twice — for a visiting Terrence Higgins Trust speaker. A second hospitalised Aids victim hasn't had the careless and sensational treatment accorded that first isolated and lonely dying man.

NIGRA's paper, Gay Star, carries regular and detailed safer sex reminders. The most recent issue has a short article by the gay who won that case at Strasbourg, Jeff Dudgeon, now almost 'a gay elder statesman' in his own joking words. Dudgeon reckons Belfast is likely to miss the worst effects of the current crisis because it has no gay saunas and 'popper' use is limited. Isolation is an additional factor: 'Not being a metropolitan city we are spared the exaggerated individualism that passes for freedom in London and America, encouraging as it does promiscuity to the exclusion of a constructive life-style. The irony is that so many valuable gays have left our backwater over the years for those very cities. Perhaps (gay) Belfast's best will stay home in future.'

It's surely ironic that NI gays — while saving to leave forever? — bolt at weekends for the thriving saunas of Dublin, capital (though always a law unto itself) of supposedly ultra-holy Catholic Ireland, and only two hours 15 minutes away by train. And even more ironic that stern Northern activists should have insisted, with some heat, that their Dublin colleagues police the saunas more severely to cut the risk of transmission of Aids. In Dublin, of course, all and any expression of homosexuality is still illegal. A Dublin gay, Joycean scholar David Norris, is currently suing the Republic at the bar of Europe for infringing his rights to respect for his private life. The Irish Government is arguing that he has not shown he is threatened by prosecution and claims there is no case on file in the past six years involving homosexual acts in private. ●

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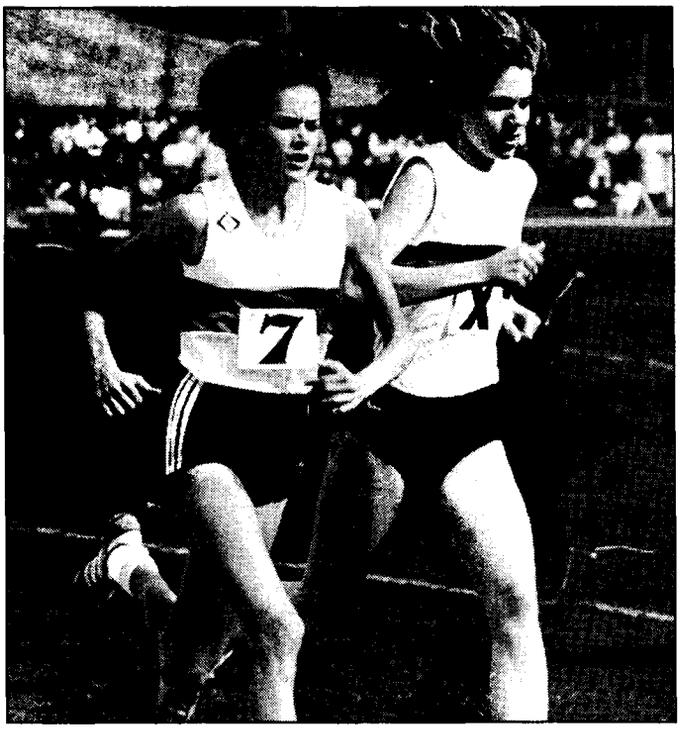

Camera Press

Within the next 20 years women should achieve equality on the running track, according to a detailed analysis of running records over the past 50 years by K. F. Dyer, who teaches social biology at Adelaide University. Dyer's analysis (*Journal of Biosocial Science* vol 18, p169, 1986) suggests that by 1998 women ought to be running the 5,000, 10,000 metres and the marathon in much the same times as men. Over shorter distances it is estimated that it will take a few years longer for women to reach equality, perhaps until 2018 for the sprints. The reason for this change in women's athletic performances seems to be related to changes in social and medical attitudes, and there's no evidence that the gap will 'level off' leaving a permanent and fundamental difference between the best performances of men and women. What an athlete can achieve depends to some extent on what he or she believes can be achieved. It used to be thought that no one could run a mile in under four minutes. It also used to be believed that women simply could not run as fast as men, but if Dyer is correct it's only a matter of time before they do.

John Timson

Labour councils bank (literally) on Neil for PM

TWO LABOUR councils have borrowed millions of pounds that they will find it difficult to repay unless there's a Labour government after the next General Election.

Manchester City Council and Islington in London have entered into 'deferred payment schemes' which they won't begin to repay until 1989. A company called Saturn Management, a subsidiary of Mercantile House, has agreed to enter into building contracts worth £100 million on Manchester's behalf. The council will pay an average of £26 million a year for seven years starting in 1989.

Islington is borrowing £20 million from Saturn in this way and borrowed another £20 million last year. Other councils, including Conservative ones, are thought to have negotiated similar deals.

Islington, which is ratecapped, already has the largest debt of any council in the country. Finance chair Alan Clinton says: 'There could be a problem repaying the loan if the government restricts our payments further, particularly in the disastrous event of a Tory government being re-elected.'

Councils have been trying various forms of creative accounting to avoid controls on spending ever since the 1980 Local Government Planning and Land Act, which laid down the rules on capital spending (that is, one-off spending which increases a council's assets). Various devices are also used to get round the rate-capping controls on running costs.

The 'loophole' the councils are exploiting is that, although there is a year-by-year limit on capital spending, there's nothing to stop councils putting off the payments into the future. But if the limits aren't substantially raised from present levels, the repayments will use up an awful lot of councils' capital allocations in 1989.

Privately, shadow Chancellor Roy Hattersley is thought to take a dim view of being cast in the role of knight on a white charger, but shadow environment secretary John Cunningham has promised that councils will be allowed to spend the money they've raised by selling council houses. Many councils are sitting on piles of money that monetarist ideology won't let them spend.

Legislation to stop some of the wilder excesses of creative accounting is due in October, but it's possible that the government may act earlier to halt big deferred purchase schemes.

Alison Barker

MISCELLANY

Makes you weep

A pity the TV cameras weren't rolling when Lord Northfield made a fool of himself in the House of Lords last week. Former Birmingham Labour MP Donald Chapman almost wept about 'the great mischief' the Tory government is doing to the drugs industry. He complained he wasn't being allowed to introduce an amendment to prevent small companies producing patented drugs under licence during the last four years of a drug's patent. By allowing this 'piracy' the government was 'putting in jeopardy something like £150 or £200 million of sales' he whined. He felt compelled to admit he's an 'adviser' to a 'drug manufacturing company'. We can supply further particulars. It's Merck, Sharpe and Dohme. And he got sharp shrift from Nye Bevan's old Parliamentary Private Secretary Lord Bruce of Donnington, who pointed out that he hadn't consulted Labour's Chief Whip over this bit of special pleading.

Buy in May

Our tip to buy Allied Lyons (proceeds to Alcoholics Anonymous) has neither enhanced nor damaged the reputation of the New Statesman *Stock Exchange Collection Can Project. But a smaller than expected rights issue, and 'good' trading performance will carry Allied's share price in the upward direction in due course, so hang in there. This week our pundit suggests we buy Plessey shares; 'good' trading (i.e. arms dealing) figures, due out mid-May, should triumph over the uncertainty created by GEC's bid for the company currently with the Monopolies Commission. Proceeds to Electronics for Peace — but* caveat speculator.

Gissa policy

The Liberal/SDP Alliance comes out badly in the detailed breakdown of the Harris poll on tonight's ITV *London Programme*. Of those who said they supported the Alliance — and we're down to the hard core these days — *58 per cent* agreed with the statement: 'It is hard to say what the policies of the Alliance actually are.' As many as 21 per cent agreed 'strongly'. Of the whole sample, 70 per cent agreed. Labour came out best from the supplementary questions, which were asked in London last weekend. Told 'the Labour Party in London is too left-wing', a bare majority of the whole sample (57 per cent) agreed, but only 33 per cent of Labour supporters agreed, and only 9 per cent strongly (24 per cent 'slightly').

Decomposite

Who says death is a subject of funereal gloom? Try booking a place at the 'Joint Conference of Burial and Cremation Authorities' at Felixtowe in September. The after-dinner speaker is Percy Edwards, 'a well-known television artist' who makes birds noises for a living. And a major address under the heading 'Whose funeral is it anyway?' is promised from a Harrogate cleric, the Reverend A. Body.

Benefits scam

Three Croydon council staff at the centre of a housing benefit scandal have been given golden handshakes totalling £86,000 in a secret deal which ends any further council investigation into the matter. We revealed (1 November and 20 December 1985) that the mess resulted in overpayments of £750,000 and tenants being evicted because they weren't getting their money. Now Tory leader Peter Bowness seems to have taken the pragmatic view that it's less hassle to buy off staff suspended pending investigation than to try to root out what really happened. Housing director Adrian Britton leaves with £42,000, his assistant Phillip Ball gets £24,200 and chief benefits officer Terry Cutler gets £19,650.

Sweet talk

Everyone's talking about anti-foodie Dr Elizabeth Whelan who blew in from the US to tell us all to ignore the health freaks and trust the junk food. Maybe you caught her getting a rather soft handling from the Guardian*'s Rosemary Collins this Monday morning, or a tougher going-over from Geoffrey Cannon and Caroline Walker on LBC later in the day. Facts: The PR agency handling her UK tour, Kingsway PR, has white bread, sugar, butter and additives as clients. And the (American) Centre for Science and the Public Interest exposed the US outfit Whelan works for, the American Council on Science and Health, in a report called* Voodoo Science, Twisted Consumerism. *For all its ivory tower-like name, the ACSH has, or had in 1981 when the report was compiled, over 100 industrial sponsors, including Coke, Pepsi, Hershey and the National Soft Drinks Association.*

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SCRUTINY

Politics of envy

ABOLITION BONANZA

THE GOVERNMENT was right about the abolition of the GLC. It did save money. Or put it another way. It enabled people to save money. Well, *some* people

The demise of the GLC has meant pay increases for the nine 'top people' who run the new free-standing Inner London Education Authority. Old Education Officer Bill Stubbs on between £35,500 and £39,500 a year is now Director of Education/ Chief Executive on a salary of £46,000. He retains the name Bill Stubbs.

He is to have a deputy, paid £38,500 — considerably more than any chief education officer, let alone deputy, earns in any other education authority. And no, ILEA isn't the biggest education authority in the country. Strathclyde is.

Leading Fabian Tessa Blackstone is re-employed on a higher salary. She's now Director of Education/ Clerk to the Education Committee on a salary scale of £31-£34,000. (All these include £1,470 London Allowance.) In other education authorities the job of clerk is taken by the chief education officer or the chief executive.

It's not clear what increased duties Director of Schools David Mallen, Director for Post-16 Education David Falcon and Chief Inspector David Hargreaves have taken on. There were no increases in the numbers of ILEA pupils, students, schools or colleges over the Easter weekend. But they've had their jobs regraded and are now paid more, unlike ILEA's other 84,000 employees.

It's not just ILEA. In Tory Bromley, famous for bringing down the GLC's Fares Fair policy in the courts, nine officials have shared secret bonus payments totalling £62,000 for extra work caused by the GLC's abolition. Labour councillor Selwyn Ward says: 'There was no proper assessment and the council rules forbid me even to name the people involved.'

We can oblige. Chief Executive Nigel Palk with £20,000 and Borough Treasurer Neil Newton with £15,000 are the two principal beneficiaries.

But back to a Labour Council. Camden has paid about £150,000 in bonuses for GLC work, but spread among about 100 officials, each getting between 5 and 10 per cent of their salary. 'There was a special emphasis on lower-paid workers,' says a spokesperson. 'The final tally isn't yet known.'

Barry Hugill and Christian Wolmar

UPP

Fabian Society (motto: 'when I strike I strike hard') luminary Tessa Blackstone, now earning at least £31,000

Lest we forget . .

AS INDIA rejects Union Carbide's offer of $350 million compensation for the Bhopal gas disaster (it had asked for $1,000 million), new evidence of the longer term damage caused — especially to women — has just been published.

Spontaneous abortions and stillbirths tripled among 2,566 pregnant women exposed to methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas at Bhopal, as compared with other Indian women, says a report of the Indian Council of Medical Research on the health effects of the tragedy.

The growth of the foetus in the womb was retarded and there were 33 babies born with congenital effects. MIC may also cause genetic problems in the future, it says.

Some 2,000 people are believed to have died directly from the gas leak from the plant owned by US multinational Union Carbide in December 1984. (It's not just nuclear disasters . . .) Autopsies have shown that while many organs were affected by intense congestion, swelling and bleeding, the lungs bore the brunt of the destructive force of MIC. Early results of small surveys show signs of chromosomal aberrations in gas victims. A Cancer Registry for all of Bhopal has been set up to study the long-term carcinogenic effects of MIC.

What has been almost as terrifying as the gas leak is the dearth of detailed knowledge about its health effects because scientists, both in medicine and industry, knew pitifully little about the ravages of MIC. 'Published information on the toxic effects of MIC in man [sic] was almost non-existent,' says the ICMR report, and methods of detoxification for victims virtually unknown.

With people suffering from the severe after-effects of MIC exposure, the need now is for sustained monitoring and surveillance of the Bhopal survivors. To this end 15 institutions and more than 100 scientists are collaborating on 24 research projects through a national network to follow up effects of the disaster. As part of this the ICMR has launched a massive survey of 85,000 of the 400,000 people exposed to MIC at Bhopal, with an additional 20,000 people from unexposed areas to act as the control and reference population.

Uma Ram Nath

You cannot be serious

THERE ARE some crimes so heinous that the government devised in the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act a new category for them: 'serious arrestable offences'. Treason, murder, rape, kidnapping, hijacking, sex with girls under 13, buggery of boys under 16, causing explosions likely to endanger life and property. And stealing a nest of tables.

This last isn't specified in those terms by the Act, but section 116 subsection 7 also defines an offence as serious if it leads (or is likely to lead) to 'serious financial loss' to a person, defined as serious *to the person suffering it.*

Critics were always worried about this. As a GLC Police Committee paper put it: 'in this way the Act creates double standards for identical offences . . . A wealthy miser has £10 stolen. Is he or she to be treated as the victim of a serious offence?'

Now John Howard, a solicitor in Bath, writes to the *Law Society Gazette* complaining that, as a duty solicitor under the new scheme on five occasions, he was 'bewildered' by its implementation. In one case, local police decided that a client accused of the theft of a nest of tables was being accused of a 'serious' offence. Howard argued that since the tables were worth at most £100, this couldn't possibly be so, 'but my argument was simply met with a blank refusal to accept it . . . There was nothing I could do to reverse the superintendent's decision.'

The consequences of an offence's being labelled 'serious' are grave. A person suspected of such an offence may be detained in some cases for 96 hours, and access to a solicitor and notification of detention to a friend or relative may be denied for up to 36 hours.

It's not just the civil liberties lobby who have been alarmed. According to Andrew Lockley of the Law Society this confirms the Society's worst fears. During the passage of the Bill through Parliament the Society made strenuous attempts to change it, 'but Home Office ministers at the time were adamant that the police should be able to treat as a "serious arrestable offence" a theft of relatively small value from an individual of small means.'

Jolyon Jenkins

● Highly recommended is the Galop Guide to 'Police Powers and Your Rights', easily the clearest such guide. As it says, 'recent changes in the law make it more important than ever that we know what the police can and cannot do.' Written by the Gay London Police Monitoring Group, it's equally applicable to all people and organisations likely to have hassles with the police over confidential papers, or to deal with people stopped and searched or arrested. £1 from BM GALOP, London WC1N 3XX, cheques payable to Gay Civil Liberties Trust.

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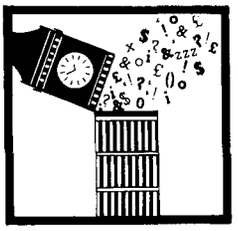

Those who judge schools should first know how to add up

PETER KELLNER

PAUL SAMPLE is the editor of *Liberal News* and a Liberal candidate in Camden in next week's elections for the Inner London Education Authority; he ought to know a thing or two about schools and how to communicate his views to voters. Anne Sofer was an SDP member of the Greater London Council, is standing for her party in Camden for ILEA and writes regularly in *The Times* about education; she ought to know a thing or two etc. etc.

Unfortunately for the Alliance, Sample and Sofer seem to know different things or two about ILEA's performance in recent years. A right-wing group operating under the lofty title of 'National Council for Education Standards' recently published a report entitled *Examination Performance of Secondary Schools in the Inner London Education Authority*. It concluded that 'ILEA comprehensive schools compare badly with those in the rest of the country in every respect of GCE A-level, O-level and CSE examinations'.

The Tories have, naturally, embraced the report. Equally naturally Labour has condemned it. The Alliance . . . ah, the Alliance! Paul Sample put out a pamphlet containing the headline: 'Kids do less well under Labour's ILEA — official report'. Anne Sofer, however, dismissed the report's findings as 'thoroughly disreputable'.

The argument about the report is important for two reasons. Policy conclusions flow, or ought to flow, from an accurate assessment of what is now happening. If ILEA is doing badly as a whole (as distinct from particular schools doing badly within the authority), this suggests that policies for schools throughout inner London need radical revision. But if ILEA's performance is par for the course, that means paying greater attention to particular schools or localities, which do not do as well as others.

The second reason for taking the argument about the report seriously flows from the first. Next week voters will take part in the first direct elections to decide who runs a £1 billion a year business employing 55,000 people, running more than 900 schools attended by 270,000 children. ILEA is the largest education authority in England and Wales. Voters deserve to have accurate information about the performance of the authority, which has been Labour-controlled for the past 16 years.

By conventional political measures, ILEA ought to remain an overwhelmingly Labour authority after next week. Voters will elect two councillors from each of 29 ILEA wards — which happen to be identical to the 29 parliamentary constituencies in inner London. In the 1983 general election, Labour won 15 of these seats, the Tories 12 and the Alliance two. So even that bleak election would have given Labour a narrow majority on ILEA. Next week, if Labour repeats its Fulham performance throughout London, it should win all bar three wards — leaving just Chelsea and Westminster South in Tory hands and Bermondsey staying with the Alliance.

But now, for the first time, it is open to electors to make a specific judgement about the merits of the different parties solely on their education policies. If the authors of the National Council report are right, it would be perfectly legitimate to want a Labour government and a Labour local council — but to have a non-Labour ILEA.

THE AUTHORS make a number of damning comments:

- 'At the age of 11 [ILEA] pupils achieve standards up to the national average. ILEA then spends vast resources on them, 40 per cent more than the national average, and they emerge five years later with results which are 30 per cent or more below the national average.'
- 'It is startling and disturbing to find that ILEA's comprehensive schools not only do less well than comprehensive schools elsewhere in the country, even in relatively socially deprived areas, but that they also do less well than secondary modern schools.'
- 'Detailed comparisons show that pupils in ILEA schools of all levels of ability do much worse than similar pupils elsewhere and that it is the lowest ability groups which suffer the most.'
- 'Most people do not know which schools are doing well and which are not. Both ILEA and HMI [the schools inspectors], who do know, have failed to make this information readily available to the public'.

If all this were true it would be a damning indictment of Labour's stewardship of education in London. But it is not true.

To take the last point first: ILEA has now started giving school-by-school examination data. Perhaps the authority should have done so earlier. But then, perhaps the National Council authors should have checked ILEA's plans with the authority before rushing to judgement.

As to the rest of the report: it is derived from incomplete and out-of-date information. The council conducted a survey covering examination results in 1981 and 1982 in 80 per cent of ILEA schools. Eighty per cent is a good response rate; but without detailed statistical tests it is not possible to say whether the pattern of results in schools that did not respond was likely to be the same as in the schools that did.

More importantly, 1982 is four years ago. Part of ILEA's contention is that it has responded to criticisms made in an HMI report in 1980 and that ILEA's results have steadily improved since then.

More important still is the way in which schools and education authorities are compared. Inner city schools tend to have more children from poor families, more children for whom English is not the first language at home, more children whose father is out-of-work, and more children whose father and mother live apart, than schools in suburbia or the shire counties. Any statistically-based comparison has to take factors like these into account, in the form of what is known in the trade as multiple regression analysis. Broadly, that involves exploring how much of the variation in the performance of different schools and authorities can be ascribed to the 'quality' of the education and how much to the 'quality' of the children.

The National Council's report carries no such analysis. It seems oblivious of the fact that the Department of Education and Science has done precisely this kind of exercise and published its findings (Statistical Bulletin 13/84, November 1984).

The DES statisticians looked at the social mix of children in each educational authority between 1980 and 1983 and used multiple regression analysis to determine the 'expected' success rate of children in CSE, O-level and A-level examinations — that is, how many pupils you would expect to obtain, say, five or more O-levels, if you knew the social background of all children in the area, but nothing about the local schools.

By these criteria, the DES statisticians found that *fewer* children than 'expected' left ILEA schools with no, or minimal, exam passes, and *more* than expected achieved a significant number of O-level and CSE passes. ILEA did worse than 'expected' in its A-level results.

It would be wrong to say that ILEA's performance, judged by those DES statistics, is one of shining success — although ILEA officials hope that more recent statistics, when they come to be analysed, will show a significant improvement, especially with A-levels. But neither is ILEA's performance nearly as black as the National Council's authors make out. In a week's time we shall see which of us the voters of inner London believe. □

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FOR SCHOOLS DEMOCRACY

State education is in disarray, teachers are demoralised, and the cherished dream of genuine comprehensive education is threatened. Next week's elections for the Inner London Education Authority provide an important chance to begin the fightback, argues PAUL FLATHER

THE FIGHT FOR decent, free education for all goes to the heart of any Socialist programme. It is one of Labour's historic tasks. Only twenty years ago public education seemed on a crest of a wave: standards rising, more and more local authorities 'going comprehensive' to root out social inequality, divisiveness, and elitist selection, and further and higher education being expanded for all 'qualified and able to benefit'. The dream behind the 1944 Education Act seemed within reach.

And now today state education is in disarray. Public spending cuts, falling rolls, curriculum reforms, crumbling schools, demoralised teachers and mass unemployment — removing incentives to learn — have plunged classrooms into crisis. The Right have of course increased their ideological attacks on the system, blaming comprehensives for falling standards, mostly with discredited statistics, and for creating a 'yob culture'; blaming teachers for 'politicising education', and the Left in general for 'permissive' attitudes and 'progressive teaching methods' allegedly failing the nation's pupils.

A flow of middle-class parents is turning to an increasingly strengthened private sector, seriously undermining the goal of a 'common school experience'. In some parts of London demand for places at such commercial schools is said to be up by 20 per cent. Even those who don't have that kind of money are worried. One parent told me last week she can't understand why her children aren't being 'stretched at school'. Another woman said her 14-year-old grandaughter can hardly spell. 'My school was never like that. What are you going to do about it?'

These are serious complaints, and the Tories are right on one thing: it's not just a question of money, though more is clearly, urgently, needed. At least the long running teachers' dispute has forced education to the top of the national political agenda. The stakes are very high, so Conservatives themselves are currently locked in internal ideological battle to decide which way Conservative education policy is to swing. Behind all the media hype pitting dries against wets, the real debate there is about education vouchers, once again being touted by the free-market Institute of Economic Affairs and right-wingers like Baroness Cox and John Marks.

Vouchers given to parents to cash in at the state school of their choice would result in some schools 'booming' and others 'withering away' and must be the surest way of ensuring a 'two nations' philosophy in the classroom. But there may be a deeper logic. It is an economic fact that new technology demands a core of highly skilled and able technicians — hence the goverment's recent moves towards setting up 20 special technology schools. But for the mass, technology means 'de-skilled' work, which a return to selective and hierarchical education would serve well.

Sally & Richard Greenhill

Every middle-class parent's dream: rows of tidy desks, smiling pupils eager to learn

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Whatever the plan (one way or another giving education a strong business ethos), Labour has to respond positively, and a chance comes in next week's Inner London Education Authority elections, the first direct elections of councillors to run an education system for close on 100 years. It will be like electing a latter-day school board, like those in the 1870s which did so much to foster working class education. If Labour retains power as expected, with a host of new members with specialist educational interests, it must embark on a positive programme to regain the initiative so wastefully squandered when the Jim Callaghan/Shirley Williams 'Great Debate' of the '70s fizzled out.

A Labour-run ILEA will be able to build on some nine years of solid work and preparation, and its manifesto *Learning for Life* sets the right tone. The first task will be to strive to stop the haemorrhage from the state sector: articulate and forceful parents opting for the commercial sector, and teachers voting with their feet — at the last count 1,500 had left in 15 months, according to the Secondary Heads Association. Teaching and standards will have to be spotlighted, also disruptive pupils, attendance, homework provision, and the host of reforms pinpointed in the three major ILEA school inquiries, *Hargreaves*, *Thomas* and *Fish*.

WHATEVER the (right-wing) National Council for Education Standards may claim, respectable studies that take into account social deprivation factors such as that one in four London pupils come from single-parent homes, 40 per cent from ethnic groups, show that standards have *improved*. The current ILEA has set markers for the future by publishing examination results and summoning the heads of the ten comprehensives at the bottom of the pile to County Hall to explain themselves.

Labour will have to *genuinely* involve parents in schools, going for 'parent power', buzz word of the moment, not as the purchasing parent power envisaged by Tories in their voucher scheme, nor as the cosy, professional, middle-class, variety presaged by David Owen, but as full involvement of all — aided by giving parents more information, by setting up parents' advice centres, and by publishing full school records. Brent council has sent every parent a 36-page handbook on their rights, a start towards a genuine partnership. Labour must also press on with its special emphasis on blacks, girls and women, and those with special needs.

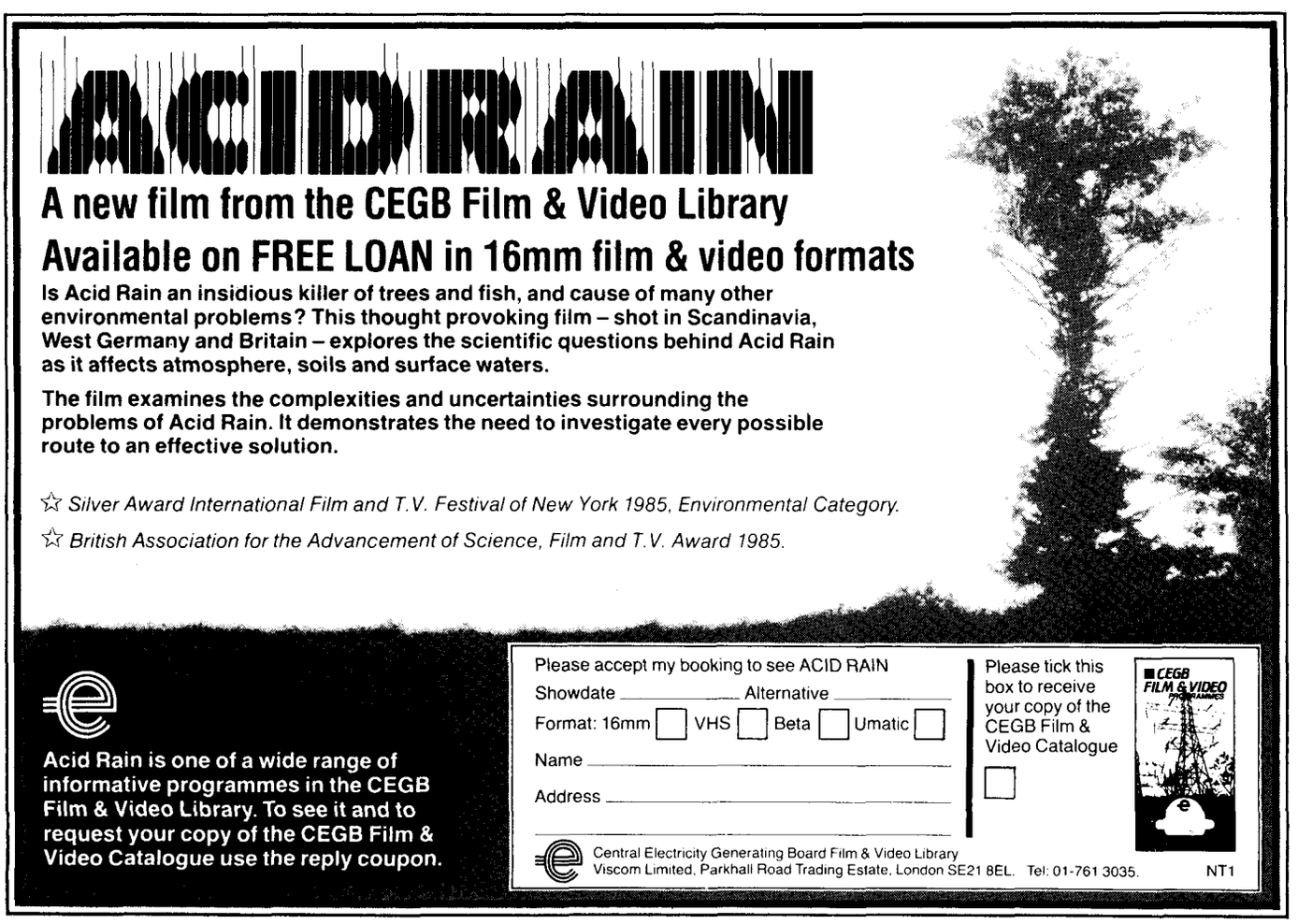
While ILEA has made great strides in developing multi-cultural education with no help from central government, it remains a myth in most schools. And on crucial questions such as the appointment of more Black teachers, or whether teachers teach Blacks as well as they teach whites, little is known. The tertiary college programme for post-16 education, to date a rather slow and tortuous journey, must be urged forward not so much as a reaction to falling rolls and sixth forms unable to provide a full curriculum, but as the crystallisation of the 'comprehensive county college' heralded in the 1944 Act.

But above all ILEA will have to build a new partnership with teachers. It may well be that, after the last three years, 'normalisation' in schools will never occur. But whatever kind of deal emerges from ACAS in the summer, teachers will have to consider co-operation with progressive Labour-run authorities like the ILEA. It isn't just a question of professional pride and public service — the achievements of 40 years of educational progress are at stake.

This means that the Inner London Teachers Association, representing London members of the National Union of Teachers, will have to come to grips with ethnic monitoring, vital if the Authority is to make real progress combatting racism and ethnic disadvantage in schools; accept the movement of teachers as the rolls, already down one-third since 1970, fall by a further 10 per cent to 1990; and co-operate in schemes like school records, greater parental involvement, and the tertiary college reorganisation.

All this will have to come from ILTA in partnership with a Labour-run ILEA not withstanding the union's own obviously more militant feelings about pay and conditions. It has just complaints against the miserliness of the Conservative government. But with the whole state education system coming under economic and ideological threat it must find it within itself to stand square with progressive local education authorities. The alternative, as we have said, is the return of the two-nation classroom. □

Paul Flather is a Labour Party Candidate for the ILEA in Tooting.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STEADY DRIFT TO DISASTER

In his second and concluding article, SIMON HEAD maps out the inexorable decline in West Midlands industry

AMONG WEST MIDLANDS industrialists the views expressed about the future of their region vary according to the type of company they happen to work for. There is the handful of large multinational corporations which dominate the industrial scene in the West Midlands. There are the host of small and medium sized companies which have grown up around them. These two groups of companies form in effect two distinct industrial communities, each with its own problems and perspectives.

BL of course heads the list of large companies in the West Midlands, and BL's weakness continues to pose the greatest single threat to the economic future of the region. A 1983 study of the West Midlands components industry commissioned by the County Council conservatively estimated that 60,000 jobs in the county were, directly or indirectly, dependent on Austin Rover alone. Further decline at BL would therefore push the West Midlands unemployment level ominously close to the 25 per cent mark.

BL aside, most of the dominant manufacturing companies in the West Midlands are drawn from the elite of industry: GEC, GKN, IMI, Goodyear, Lucas, Tube Investments, Northern Engineering Industries. All these companies have, since 1979, made major redundancies in the West Midlands and some, like GKN, have run down whole sectors of engineering production. But the manufacturing base they have retained in the region often conforms to the image of industry which the Government likes to propagate: 'lean', 'fit' and as good as the international competition.

From 1979 onwards GKN laid off nearly 2,000 workers in Wolverhampton alone. These massive redundancies were brought about in part by declining UK demand for vehicle components, in part by GKN's decision to abandon various 'metal bashing' activities in the face of low cost competition from producers in Southern Europe and the Third World. GKN's principal surviving plant in Wolverhampton is now its Technology Centre, the chief R & D establishment for GKN plants worldwide. Employing 300 people, the Centre is responsible for the automation of production of these GKN plants, and for the development of new products. One of its departments promotes the introduction of CAD-CAM, an area where GKN's British plants are ahead of its overseas subsidiaries.

This is just one example of the West Midlands plants operating at the 'leading edge' of international competition. Plenty more could be cited: IMI, NEI and Goodyear at Wolverhampton, Jaguar at Coventry, Lucas Aerospace at Solihull; GEC at Coventry and Rugby. Enterprises such as these punctuate the image of a British industrial base riddled with age and inefficiency. Nonetheless, despite their continuing presence in the region, it is far from clear that the multinationals are going to be the chief agents of renewal in the West Midlands. Here uncertainty arises not so much from the way in which their plants operate but rather from the kind of decisions which they themselves are making about their own futures.

In an appearance last April before the House of Lords Committee on Overseas Trade, Sir John Harvey-Jones, chairman of ICI, explained what these decisions were, why they were being made and why it was that ICI, to remain a world leader in chemicals, had to give priority to investment in its overseas plants.

To remain at the top ICI needed 'to supply the most demanding customers and they are all too seldom found in the UK'. So 'if we want to develop products for use in aerospace we have to serve the American market. If we want to develop the electronics industry we have to serve the American or overseas market'. ICI is not a West Midlands company but the West Midlands multinationals have had to make the same kind of choices as ICI, and for much the same kind of reasons. For almost all UK multinationals operating in the West Midlands the rate of growth achieved by their overseas subsidiaries has outstripped, often by very wide margins, the growth both of UK based production, and of exports from the UK.

This phenomenon was analysed by Frank Gaffikin and Andrew Nixon in their 1983 study *Jobs Crisis and the Multinationals* and it has persisted in the succeeding years. It emerges most clearly from a comparison of the sales of products made overseas and of products exported from the UK. Between 1979 and 1984 sales of GEC's overseas subsidiaries grew in real terms by 194 per cent, while GEC's exports from the UK grew by four per cent. Figures for other companies tell the same story. For IMI a 91 per cent growth of overseas output, against a 34.4 per cent fall in exports from the UK; for NEI, 54.5 per cent against −26 per cent; for TI Group, 26 per cent against −57.3 per cent; for GKN 2.4 per cent against −45 per cent; for Delta, 2.5 per cent against −22.1 per cent. Only in the case of Lucas, buoyed up its aerospace division, have the two statistics broadly kept pace; 30 per cent against 28 per cent.

Leaving aside the blame for this exodus — whether it rests with the multinationals for executing it, or with the government for its mismanagement of the domestic economy — there remains the issue of how it affects the West Midlands and areas like it. It's hard to see how the West Midlands can benefit. When British multinationals serve their most dynamic markets primarily through expansion overseas, output and employment at their British plants suffer, however 'fit and lean' these may have become. Capacity created abroad is capacity not created in Britain. Markets supplies from plants abroad are markets not supplied from plants in Britain.

THE PROBLEMS posed by UK multinationals in the West Midlands are still in part the problems of success, of companies which can still fight their way into the most competitive overseas markets. But though these companies provide the bulk of the region's exports, they do not provide the bulk of its manufacturing employment. The Buchanan Report on Black Country Industry (1983) estimated that in 1978 the 20 largest firms in the Black Country provided only 16.5 per cent of manufacturing jobs. An overwhelming majority of those employed in manufacturing in the West Midlands work in small and medium sized companies, and it is among these firms that the most acute symptoms of industrial decay are to be found.

The Buchanan Report carried out a detailed survey of these firms, looking particularly at their capacity for innovation. It found that a minority were innovative but that for most 'the depth and comprehensiveness of the malaise of the core metal-related industries of the Black Country, accumulated lack of R & D and materials and electronics expertise, problems of finding new products and markets etc., is beyond the capacity of a largely small and medium sized sector to overcome unaided'.

IN WOLVERHAMPTON today much of the original Buchanan diagnosis still applies. While it is possible to find a minority of small and medium-sized companies which are doing well a majority of them still conform all too closely to the Buchanan stereotype. The Wolverhampton Chamber of Commerce last year conducted an informal survey of its own to find out why so many companies in its area were not taking advantage of export opportunities. Its findings have a very familiar ring about them. Many firms had a bad reputation for meeting delivery dates; there was an ignorance of the techniques of export promotion, a lack of R & D, a fear of over-extension, a poor analysis of market requirements etc.

The reasons for this bad performance aren't hard to find. These delinquent exporters are, for the most part, smaller companies which have emerged from the recession not just leaner, but also very much weaker. Indeed, for most of them the recession has never really ended. Domestic demand for their product is

Correction

Last week (on p.12) the wrong person was identified as Omar Sodani. Our apologies.

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No-one plays a part in more industries than The Stock Exchange.

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still weak, profitability is low, and the recession has left them with a crushing burden of bank debt. This for them is the most damaging liability of all because it tends to put the new technology, particularly CAD-CAM beyond their reach. They know that they must have it, but the lean years have exhausted their sources of equity and credit, and they just can't raise the money.

These are precisely the kind of companies which the West Midlands Enterprise Board has been able to help, but the WMEB can only *scratch the surface. Meanwhile companies* without the new technology are dangerously exposed. At the top of the product range they loose out to capitalist competitors who can afford the new technology; at the lower end of the range, where too many of them still operate, they are vulnerable to low cost producers from the Pacific Basin. Their weakness in the face of this dual challenge accounts for the diminishing trade surpluses in sectors such as mechanical engineering.

In a forecast commissioned last year by the county council, Cambridge Econometrics predicted that on present policies the West Midlands region will loose another 30 per cent of its manufacturing jobs between now and the end of the century. It's not difficult to imagine how this might come about. The weak multinationals like BL and Lucas Electrical shedding jobs by the thousand; the stronger multinationals holding on to their base in the region, but replacing labour with capital as the new technology is more widely applied. And the smaller companies shedding labour as their number is reduced by the workings of the international free market.

BEHIND THESE statistics lies a future of rising poverty and desperation for the West Midlands, creating in the end the kind of social disintegration hitherto only to be found in the worst of the American ghettoes. But it is not only the industrial areas of the country which will suffer. For the West Midlands to lose another 30 per cent of its manufacturing jobs implies a further loss of international competitiveness and a further widening of the gap on visible trade. With oil a diminishing asset, there is only one way in which external balance could then be restored: through a contraction of the domestic economy and a fall in living standards — for the whole country.

The decline of the West Midlands and areas like it has now gone well beyond the point where it can be reversed by marginal shifts of public expenditure reluctantly conceded by the Treasury. Industrial Britain now needs a Marshall Plan of its own, a national commitment to industrial renewal on a scale not seen since the post-war days of the first Marshall Plan. But will it get one? The record of the past 30 years is littered with the casualties of industrial policy, and the money, skills and political will now need to put things right won't be at all easy to assemble. A high priority for industry means a lower priority for other things, including many areas of social expenditure. No government will find this an easy set of priorities to enforce, particularly if the electorate remains unconvinced about the true magnitude of the crisis. But if the slow, steady drift to disaster is to be reversed, these choices are going to have to be made soon. □

A 100th ANNIVERSARY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MAY DAY!

THIS MONTH MARKS what must be one of the most well-forgotten centenaries of one of the world's most widely celebrated days. It was 100 years ago this 1 May that 340,000 workers went on strike in the United States for the eight hour day. It was the first time May Day was co-opted as Workers Day. In Chicago a bomb killed a policeman. The police fired at random into demonstrators killing four and wounding many more. The press went into a pitch of hysteria against unions and anarchists and demanded hangings.

They got them. In November Albert Parsons, August Spies, Adolph Ficher and George Engel were executed on framed-up charges. May Day was given its first martyrs and a lasting example of capitalist justice. Four years later, following the congress of the Second International, May Day became International Workers Day. The American unions were joined by European countries in organising massive 1 May demonstrations for the eight hour day and the right of association.

Today, in Britain, all this may appear little more than an interesting bit of labour history. Even amongst dedicated trade unionists this weekend's extra day off will be little more than a welcome Bank Holiday just as the weather gets better; on the news it's the annual chance to spot the latest in Soviet armaments being hauled through Red Square; in the US, May Day has long been a casualty of the Cold War, and Labor Day is held in September.

The demise of the highly politicised May Day in Britain and other Western democracies reflects the depoliticising climate of the affluent '60s. But if workers in the industrialised countries sat back momentarily to enjoy the fruits of capitalism, the corporations didn't sit back: they shifted into the cheap labour pastures of the Third World. To assist their investment plans there was the helpful collapse of democratic government in such countries as Brazil, Argentina, and the Philippines. Suddenly a major portion of the world's manufacturing was taking place in Latin America and South East Asia. Thousands of workers in car plants in Sao Paulo in Brazil or Cape Province in South Africa, or in garments factories and electronics assembly lines in South East Asia, started to organise.

In these countries May Day has become once more a potent symbol for labour resistance. 1 May gave its name to the new inependent union movement Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) which emerged at the start of the '80s in the Philippines. On May Day last year I watched tens of thousands of workers pour onto the streets of Manila even though their marches were banned by President Marcos and armed troops were on the streets. In South Africa, May Day has been banned since '63. Last year the new black independent unions, on the verge of uniting into the most powerful labour confederation even seen in the country, decided to reclaim May Day as a workers' holiday. 20,000 workers risked arrest in large and small gatherings around the country in the biggest labour celebration in the history of South Africa.

Of necessity, these new unions are highly political. They've had to develop tactics which interlink union action and popular resistance. The role of multinationals in Third World industrialisation has also created a particular sense of worker internationalism. In the May Day rally held last year in Port Elizabeth in South Africa, black workers were discussing (along with debates on women's rights and the linking of union and community struggles) how they could give support to the fight for collective bargaining rights of Brazilian workers at the Firestone plant in Sao Paulo.

Despite the long tradition of internationalism there is much that our own unions still fail to understand about workers in the Third World. We need to drop the paternalistic attitude which still runs throughout our unions and the Labour Party in Britain. Helpfully the KMU in the Philippines has actually started to use May Day to organise educational visits to the Philippines for foreign union delegates. One such British delegate told me 'I naively thought trades unionism was a British export – something the rest of the world learns from us. Now I know differently. I'd tell anyone involved in trade union education not to walk, but to *run* to the Philippines.'

Not every unionist gets the chance to have such first hand experience. But western unions are slowly becoming more aware that militant labour organisation does now exist in some Third World countries. A new scope for labour internationalism is being created. This April, hosted by the Transport & General Workers Union and in large part paid for by collections in car factories throughout Britain, unionists from 16 countries including Brazil, South Africa, and South Korea met in Liverpool. All of them were shopfloor workers for General Motors. They were able to begin steps for a worldwide General Motors union strategy. They are now printing their own international GM Workers newspaper *GM Workers Voice* in five different languages. Ford workers linked up in a similar international meeting last year and set up their own information network.

These moves are just beginnings (not all Third World countries have militant unions and as yet workers in only a few companies are organising internationally) but they are qualitively different from some of the empty 'workers of the world unite' rhetoric we are used to in the labour movement here. They also mark a break with the Cold War obsessions of some of the old international union bodies. Third World unions may even return May Day to its rightful place in our labour traditions.

Stuart Howard

Stuart Howard works for International Labour Reports. *A full report on the GM Workers World Conference appears in the current issue.*

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MEDIA

What's in and what's out in censorship

JOHN ELLIS

THE CHURCHILL BILL may be dead but the controversies it stirred up will not go away so easily. For that, Winston Jr should thank Clare Short whose bill to outlaw 'page 3' nudes was despatched even more quickly but which touched an equally strong pulse, this time on the Left. Their coincidence highlighted the complexity of censorship, putting two different attitudes in the public eye together for the first time.

Churchill proposed a traditional form, setting limits on expression in a way calculated to generate a few isolated major law cases and a general climate of timidity among those not willing to risk persecution. Churchill proposed a censorship of limit-cases and fear: Short, a principled censorship concerned with the everyday. In seeking to prevent 'Page 3's' habitual juxtaposition of rape and titillation, Short proposed a censorship of widespread, mainstream practices which are profoundly unacceptable to a large fraction of the population, yet taken for granted by many others.

Short's bill unearthed the deep problems in the traditional alliance between liberalism and the Left on censorship matters. The implications of her polemical bill and its reception have reached far wider than the confines of the Left. At an anti-censorship meeting called by the Association of Independent Producers (AIP) two weeks ago, Jeremy Isaacs, the Chief Executive of Channel 4, delivered a ringing denunciation of Churchill. Channel 4 operates a kind of progressive censorship policy. 'With the possible exception of *Hill Street Blues*', Isaacs claimed that Channel 4 tended to avoid material where the solutions to problems were achieved through violence.

Such a position — at least on civilian violence if not war dramas — is congruent with Short's: it identifies a widespread tendency within our *everyday* mass media that many see as a problem, and that's where it seeks change. It is absolutely distinct from Mary Whitehouse's use of the concept of 'violence' in the list of objectionable instances of TV violence that she sends to the Home Secretary each week. Whitehouse includes such things as news footage of white police beating up black South Africans alongside a dramatic portrayal of 'bad character (*sic*) attacking the good character with a knife".

Some people at the meeting still defended a purely liberal notion of 'the freedom of expression' as a fundamental social right: others pointed out that this concept had become something of a rogues' charter, exploited more for base than lofty intentions. For we are moving towards a more sophisticated understanding of the need to control the flow of images in our society. Since Short's bill especially, it is only the more malicious, like James Ferman of the British Board of Film Classification, who still affect a wide-eyed amazement that 'feminists support Mrs Whitehouse'.

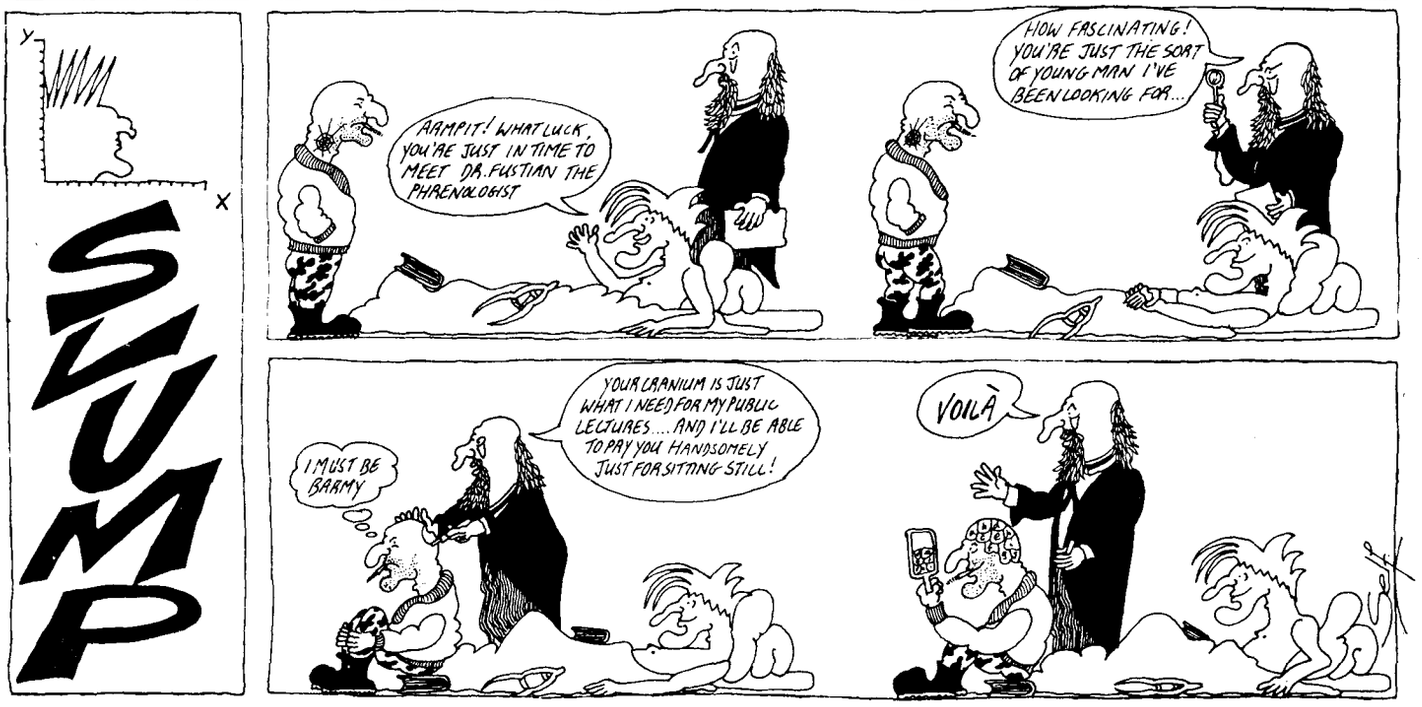
Most feel that televisual images need some kind of control, not because individually they are more offensive than those found in films or books but because of their pervasive character, and because of the very lack of variety on the small number of channels that currently exist. There is no real point in arguing for a philosophical abstraction called 'freedom of expression' when there is no real freedom of access to the means of expression.

One current tendency is to shift the public discussion away from censorship as a means of setting limits on what is acceptable towards an idea of *regulation*, which seeks to diminish the sheer quantity of certain types of representation, certain actions, certain plot tendencies (eg. Page 3's nude photo + rape story formula; graphic associations of firearms with male virility; violence as a narrative solution etc.)

Regulation is different from censorship. Regulation responds to changing attitudes by limiting *numbers* of instances rather then by outright banning (though banning would happen on rare occasions). Regulation is concerned with the everyday; censorship with the risky and the daring. Censorship is a boys' boarding school game: trying to see 'how far' they can go before the headmaster interferes.

It is a private matter, a personal one between the chaps. Regulation, however, is a matter of continuously trying to find out what exercises people; not what exercises all of the people some of the time, but certainly some of the people some of the time. So any regulators set in place by the Left would have to be publicly accountable for their activity in the way that our current censors are not. Freedom of expression is not infringed by the process of regulation because it is not primarily concerned with stopping people at the edges of TV from making experiments and taking risks. Neither is regulation appropriate to media which are less pervasive and have more varity in what is made and shown (eg cinema and theatre).

But regulation rather than censorship is necessary to control TV. The real question is not whether or not to control TV; it is (as usual) who is to control on whose behalf, and how are the controllers to be made really accountable.


Y
X
SLUMP
ARMPIT! WHAT LUCK, YOU ARE JUST IN TIME TO MEET DR. FUSTIAN THE PHRENOLOGIST
HOW FASCINATING! YOU'RE JUST THE SORT OF YOUNG MAN I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR...
I MUST BE BARMY
YOUR CRANIUM IS JUST WHAT I NEED FOR MY PUBLIC LECTURES.... AND I'LL BE ABLE TO PAY YOU HANDSOMELY JUST FOR SITTING STILL!
VOILÀ

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DIARY

Hugh Stephenson

Grenada, I suppose, first opened the majority of British eyes (including, it is said, the Queen's) to the fact American foreign and military policy is conducted without regard to the norms of international law or to concepts like respect for national sovereignty. But Grenada was small potatoes. And the people were so obviously pleased to be rid of what the New Jewel Movement had become. Somehow, ever since President Monroe first enunciated his Doctrine, we have *all* to an extent accepted that the United States is going to 'send the Marines' into banana republics in Central America and the Caribbean from time to time, when United Fruit doesn't like what's going on. But after Libya something more clearly fundamental has shifted. If 70 per cent of Americans instinctively thought the bombing was right and 70 per cent of Brits instinctively thought it was wrong, then — apart from the obvious point that R. Reagan is in touch with his grass roots and M. Thatcher is not — it means that Americans and Brits are not any longer looking at the world down the same telescope. If Lord Carrington, as NATO secretary general, isn't consulted, or even formally told in advance, that the US Air Force is about to carry out the biggest bombing raid in the Mediterranean since World War II, then that says something pretty fundamental about the reality of political partnership in NATO. Getting American nuclear bases out of Britain and renegotiating the whole basis of Western European defence suddenly ceases to be Left Speak and becomes mainstream politics.

○

The last time the Americans attacked Libya, of course, was in 1804 — which is why the US Marine Corps hymn links 'the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli'. Their patience ran out with the sensible commercial arrangement of paying protection money to Barbary pirates in return for the right to do business in peace — not because of moral scruple about providing the international terrorists then operating in the Mediterranean with the oxygen of publicity and finance, but because that year they demanded the equivalent of $250,000, which struck those then in charge of the US military-commercial complex as being over the top. But this bit of history simply reinforces the main point. In the nineteenth century, imperial powers — Europe to the fore — dealing with 'lesser breeds without the law' did not have to think in terms on national sovereignty and international law. The United States still doesn't.

○

One of the genuine advantages of middle age is that you *can* get by on less sleep. As a consequence I have just discovered a wonderful new radio programme. (I locate my taste in radio negatively by saying that, for different reasons, I cannot bear to listen to a single minute of either *Any Questions* or the *Archers* and that, single-handed, the smug audibly salivating complacency of the Radio 4 Rabbi — OK, some of his Jewish jokes are funny and, by convention only Jews are allowed to tell Jewish jokes in public, but that is not enough — has made me switch in the morning from the *Today Programme* to LBC. But this new programme *is* on Radio 4. It is *Farming Today*, which runs from 6.10-6.25 am. I had assumed that it would be *all* about barley prices and what red roses from the Channel Islands were fetching per stem that morning at New Covent Garden. But not a bit of it. Recent discussions have been with someone whose name I was that morning a bit too sleepy to catch — but who has just been appointed Professor of Animal Welfare at Cambridge — about the *concept* of animal welfare and whether it can be objectively measured, particularly in the case of farm animals; and an even more philosophical discussion with some peer about the moral issues involved in applying bio-technology to farming, which centred on the question of whether it was 'right' to interfere with 'nature'. If farmers and insomniacs are worried about these questions at 6.15 am, clearly we organs of the Left must also urgently get our minds round them.

○

ROGER WODDIS

Shaming the shires

A letter of protest at the American attack on Libya was delivered by Mrs Fairfax-Cholmeley to the commander of the F-111 base at Upper Heyford

What are you doing, Mrs Fairfax-
Cholmeley,
Leading a march against US brass?
Though there is panic in Upper Heyford,
We expect more from the upper class.

Ladies the labouring mass look up to
Shouldn't be eager to stoke the fires.
You, with a name that is hyphenated,
Cannot you see that you shame the shires?

Think of the way that you've always voted,
Think of the match on the village green,
Think less of multiple deaths and bombers,
More about beauty and *bonne cuisine*.

Daffodils bloom in the lovely gardens,
There is a jumble at Little Tew,
Tugging of forelocks in Steeple Aston —
Think of these things and keep Oxford blue.

'Ban all the bases and love thy neighbour,'
Urges the Reverend Sidney Hinkes.
Surely your duty's to heed your leaders,
Not what a terrified vicar thinks.

Who said your home will become a target?
Why do you listen to CND?
Cover your ears, Mrs Fairfax-Cholmeley,
Hand round the biscuits and pour the tea.

All the talk is of new London evening newspapers to take on the constipated *Standard*. More urgent from a reader's point of view, I would have thought, was a new Sunday paper to fill the yawning gap at the 'serious' end of the Sunday market. Exceptionally, I did find something to read in this week's *Sunday Times*. It was the first extract from the confessions of David Stockman, President Reagan's erstwhile budget director. Stockman was clearly a *believer* — a pushy, arrogant, naive, unpleasant, unpolitical believer, but a believer nonetheless. He believed that it was economically right and politically possible to make massive cuts in the planned federal budget, to cut Big Government, to cut taxes and 'restore incentives'. In short he was a born again 'supply side' economist — do these things and 'free enterprise' will take care of the rest.

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Luckily for the United States, Reagan was clearly interested only in reading the rhetoric about the supposed virtues of this enterprise economy off his autocue, was uninterested or incapable of understanding the figures involved, was certainly not willing to face the *political* consequences of trying actually to achieve the balanced budget that was the proclaimed centrepiece of the Reagan-Stockman economic strategy — and was surrounded by people whose entire *raison d'etre* was to spend more not less. Particularly Caspar Weinberger. But don't blame Caspar. He is just the front man *pro tem* of that rolling military-industrial complex. And anyway, Caspar didn't have to fight, for the President was 'saying repeatedly' that: 'Defence is not a budget issue. You spend what you need'. Also Caspar didn't have to fight, when he was up against a budget director who by his own admission was prepared to make decisions about $1.46 *trillion* defence budgets with a pocket calculator at 7.30 pm and found out too late that he had agreed in principle to apply a real percentage increase to a wrong and hugely inflated base figure. Thus did the US defence budget rise by 57 per cent in real terms between 1980 and 1982 and thus did Caspar ensure that it would go on rising in *real terms* by 7 per cent *each year*. With or without a pocket calculator that is a doubling of real spending on defence every decade. Game, set and match to the military-industrial complex.

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GADAFY'S VERY OWN REVOLUTION

Camera Press

When Reagan decided to bomb Gadafy he knew he'd picked a soft target. Hate hysteria is easily whipped up among Western public opinion against Gadafy and his 'revolutionary' state. Most socialists fall over each other in a race to dissociate themselves from his politics. But what are they? How does Libya function? GEORGE HENDERSON offers answers

DURING THE SEVENTEEN years that Colonel Gadafy has been in control, Libya has been the testbed for the development of the idiosyncratic political system that he has created. The result, so the colonel claims, is a paradigm for social, political and economic organisation in the Third World. He believes that it offers a constructive alternative to the extremes of capitalism and Marxist socialism, an alternative which offers a better solution to the problems of under-development and neo-colonialism.

The frequent lavish conferences organised in Libya to discuss the Green Book — the corpus of ideology from which the Jamahiriyah (the 'state of the masses', based on the direct popular democracy) concept is derived — attest to the importance given to it by official Libya at least. The problem is that the *Green Book* and the ideology it describes — the Third Universal Theory — are obscure and ambiguous, so that the only guide to the real nature of the Jamahiri system is the way in which it has been *applied* in Libya.

The *Green Book* devotes considerable space to demonstrating that representative democracy is a fraud and that political parties are a betrayal of democratic purpose since they represent the interests of specific groups within society, rather than the aims of society itself. The only real form of democratic expression is that which involves the people as a whole dealing directly with the issues that confront it. Indeed, it is only in this way that the sovereign will of a political entity can be expressed, since the 'people' are the sole embodiment of political sovereignty.

As a result, in Libya the politicial process involves all Libyans who are organised in a series of 'basic popular congresses'. These congresses deliberate on *all* matters of local, regional, national and international interest to Libya. They also appoint (by co-option or election) the members of the 'popular committees' which are responsible for local day-to-day administration. The congresses are also organised on a vocational basis and provide the popular committees involved with controlling the means of production.

The basic people's congresses then mandate delegates to regional popular congresses, from which, in turn, delegates are mandated to the General People's Congress; the body that acts as the equivalent of a national parliament. The crucial difference is that the mandated delegates can only express the views already decided by the basic people's congress — democracy is rooted in the base, the population at large, and is directly expressed at all levels.

The General People's Congress also has the duty of electing the various secretaries (ministers) who make up the General People's Committee (cabinet). Formally, at least, Colonel Gadafy has no role in this political structure. Instead, he and his close associates — Mustafa al-Kharroubi, Abdessalam Jalloud, Al-Khawaldi al-Khamaidi and Abu Bakr Yunis Jabar — all of whom were members of the Nasserist Revolutionary Command Council which ruled Libya up to 1977, have since then devoted themselves to 'revolutionary agitation' in favour of the

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Jamahiri system. The colonel himself is seen as the 'Revolutionary Guide'.

Partners, not wage slaves is the slogan, from the *Green Book*, that embodies the Gadafian economic ideal. Its practical expression is that all productive economic activity should be organised on a co-operative basis.

This has had two dramatic consequences: first, the production co-operatives, in that they are sovereign expressions of those economically involved, are autonomous, for there can be no supervening organisational structure (although, in practice, popular committees have to provide this function and heavy industry, particularly the oil industry, is organised in more traditional ways); and, secondly, commerce has been effectively nationalised — so as to remove any element of personal gain.

The result has been that a two sector economy has grown up. The socialised sector is anarchic and massively inefficient. In agriculture, for instance, the simple demand of food supply has meant that private peasants markets have had to be introduced and a blind eye has been turned to direct selling by peasants to consumers. The non-socialised major industrial sector — despite its popular committees — is effectively state capitalist or *étatist* in its organisation. In petty commerce the socialist measures introduced since March 1978 have had a catastrophic effect, as shops have disappeared and the vast modern hypermarkets that have replaced them suffer from chronic inefficiencies in distribution.

This egalitarian and collectivist nature of social organisation in the Jamahiri system depends heavily on the concept of *spontaneity*. One example of this is that the Jamahiriyah is responsible for its own defence — that established, professional armed forces should give way to a 'nation in arms' and, furthermore, that membership of that nation is open, first, to all Arabs, secondly, to all Muslims and, finally, to all who accept the Jamahiri system, whatever their ethnic or cultural origins.

In almost every respect, Colonel Gadafy's ideology derives from the harsh collectivity and egalitarianism of his Bedouin upbringing and from his orthodox early Muslim education. The emphasis on consensus and on consultation — as well as the assumption of the egalitarian nature of social organisation and the acceptance of limited private ownership — all fall into Muslim ideological precept. Gadafy has rejected Marxism on the grounds of atheism.

The fact is that Gadafism is a homegrown philosophy, derived from the colonel's own experiences, with intellectual input from radicals in his entourage and from Islamists from Libya and southern Tunisia. The only external influence seems to have been Nasserism — with its blend of Arab nationalism and an uneasy mixture of *étatism* and co-operativism derived both from the Yugoslav example and from Islamic practice. The most surprising feature of Colonel Gadafy's ideology is, however, its universalist approach — nowhere in the *Green Book* is there any mention of Islam.

THE PROBLEM with Gadafism is, however, that the whole elaborate structure does not really work. First, Libyans have little conviction in a system that demands constant and considerable personal sacrifice. As a result, the popular congress system has had to be 'stimulated'.

Secondly, many people simply do not believe in the ideology and resent the personal sacrifices involved. Intellectuals — forced out after the 'cultural revolution' in 1973 — and commercial groups, who left after 1977 and 1978 as commercial opportunities vanished, would obviously be antagonistic for self-evident reasons of class interest. But when students objected strongly to the attempt to coerce the student body in Benghazi in April 1976, three students were publicly hanged *pour encourager les autres*. The result has been the growth of major opposition groups inside and outside Libya itself.

The regime has reacted to both sources of opposition by creating the revolutionary committee movement in 1978 and 1979. The revolutionary committees are meant to act as guardians of Gadafism and to be clandestine. They are integrated into the formal institutions of power and provide the stimulus to ensure revolutionary orthodoxy. More recently, they have been put in charge of the means of production — thus superseding the controlling popular committees — in an attempt to stimulate economic activity.

More sinister has been their role against dissidents — for, according to Colonel Gadafy's own speech at the revolutionary committee congress in February 1980, dissidents threaten the uniqueness of Libya's revolution and must, therefore, be eliminated in order to preserve the revolution itself. It is a familiar argument of sinister tautology and has been used to justify Libyan terrorism abroad.

A similar justification has been used to explain Libya's concern over the Palestinian issue. Colonel Gadafy, as an Arab nationalist, cannot accept the presence of Israel in the Middle East without some effective compensation for the Palestinians. Libya's support for what President Reagan dismisses as 'terrorism' is, however, marginal. On the US State Department's own figures, up to January 1986, 76 per cent of all Libyan 'terrorism' had involved Libyan dissidents abroad. Virtually every other case involved Africa and none involved the Middle East.

Yet, perhaps the most ironic aspect of Libya's idiosyncratic political ideology is that, ultimately, power in Libya resides in areas which have nothing whatever to do with popular democracy or revolutionary coercion. In fact, Colonel Gadafy and his close associates rely on traditional links of marriage, kinship and patronage to sustain their power base.

The colonel depends on his tribe — the Gadafa around the Gulf of Sirte — for his protection and control of security. He relies on his old comrades in the Revolutionary Command Council for control of the army and the security services. They, in turn, rely on him to provide them with access to the spoils of power.

The whole elaborate structure of popular democracy is merely a facade, sustained in the past by oil revenues that permitted extravagant socio-political experiments, but now facing a very uncertain future. □

AUSTRALIA: A TARGET

SURPRISE THREAT TO US BASES

CLAUDIA WRIGHT on a nasty shock for PM Bob Hawke and his mate, Ronald Reagan

Washington DC

BOB HAWKE, THE AUSTRALIAN prime minister who visited London on 19 April on his way home from Washington, has almost all the qualities the Reagan Administration admires. For the leader of the Australian Labor Party, this is a paradox which has antagonised many of Labor's traditional supporters, but made Hawke immensely popular among Australia's conservative voters.

The real test of Hawke's loyalty to Washington, however, is yet to come. For he must convince Australians that the bases the US operates on Australian soil make the country more — not less — safe from foreign attack. That is a view which Australia's leading military strategists no longer believe, according to a document recently leaked from Australia's defence ministry.

Hawke's American contacts date from the early days of his career as a lawyer for the Australian trade union movement. It was a time when CIA agents operated under cover as Labour attachés of the US Consulates in the Australian cities, and when the US union leadership ran political education campaigns, subsidised by the CIA, to destroy left-wing unionism. On his first visit to Washington as Prime Minister in 1983, Hawke drove to the headquarters of the CIA publicly to pronounce the Agency innocent of any involvement in the upheaval which had toppled the Whitlam government. It was an unprecedented gesture — Australian prime ministers have usually met CIA directors in secret. The truth of Hawke's message, however, is belied by an enormous amount of evidence amassed in Australia and the US.

Back for another visit to Washington on 15 April, Hawke defended President Reagan's attack on Libya, and cast Australia's vote in the UN Security Council against the resolution condemning the US action. He is actively working with the Reagan Administration to isolate and drive David Lange, the Labor Prime Minister of New Zealand, out of office because Lange has refused to permit US nuclear-powered and armed warships into New Zealand ports — a policy Hawke's party once endorsed for Australia. Hawke has tried to overturn party opposition to Australian participation in the US Strategic Defence Initiative ('Star Wars') and is quietly opening the door to involvement by private Australian companies and researchers. Even more secretly, Hawke has connived with the French

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government against the independence movement of New Caledonia.

AS HAWKE BEGAN this trip, a radical challenge to his relationship with the Americans appeared from an unexpected direction. A classified report on Australia's national security was presented to the defence minister after a year in the making. Drafted by Paul Dibb, a former Australian intelligence official and military strategist, the report has been prepared at the direction of the Australian defence ministry, and reflects the consensus of Australia's senior military commanders. Parts of the report have already been leaked, and Dibb has amplified it.

The two key assumptions in the proposed new defence strategy are that Australia faces no threat of attack or invasion in the foreseeable future; and that for any such threat to develop would require 10 years of military buildup among Australia's northern, Asian neighbours, giving ample early warning for the Australian military forces to respond. Dismissed are the traditional ideas of the 'yellow peril' and 'red devil' that have dominated Australian security fears this century, especially since the rise of Japan and China as world powers.

The first conclusion of this new strategy is that Australia can — and ought — to be self-reliant in military terms — It has the capacity to deter any attack and defend its territory by itself. The second conclusion is even more radical. Australia's defence can be assured *without* support from the US. This is a fundamental break with Australia's long traditions of dependence, first on the British and then on the Americans — a tradition the conservative political parties used to commit Australian forces to the Korean War, the campaigns to crush nationalist movements in Malaya and Indonesia, and the Vietnam War.

THE POTENTIALLY revolutionary idea implicit in Australia's new military thinking is that if Australia can defend itself, the US bases do not contribute to Australia's long-term security. In fact, the opposite is true. Although the Australian experts can see no prospect of an attack from Indonesia or other potential adversaries in the Pacific or Indian oceans, the one threat that is clear, immediate and growing more serious by the day is of a superpower confrontation leading to a Soviet nuclear strike on Australia's US bases. And for this threat Australia has no early warning, no defence, and no effective American protection.

The US has three main bases in Australia which, between them, control the US nuclear submarines in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, monitor the Soviet Union, eavesdrop on Pacific communications and plug into the early warning network. US officials have always considered the bases vital to US nuclear strategy; Australians like Hawke have defended them by claiming they contributed to the US nuclear deterrent preventing the Soviets from firing first. But as the Reagan Administration has committed the US to a doctrine of winning nuclear war and has begun to deploy new highly accurate missiles, it seems that the US is developing the capacity to launch a first strike against the Soviet Union.

In this new and unstable atmosphere, the Soviets would certainly regard the Australian bases as strategic threats — and target them for nuclear attack. The Reagan Administration effort to develop space-based weaponry also adds to the importance of the Australian bases as targets in Soviet defence strategy.

Now that the defence establishment is assuring Australia it can be self-reliant in defence, Washington must turn to Hawke to prevent the Left from persuading public opinion that the bases should go.

COME OFF IT, KURT

AUSTRIA CUSHIONS WALDHEIM

MISHA GLENNY on why collective guilt will win the day for Kurt Waldheim

Vienna

'I KNEW ABOUT the Jews as a little kid in Vienna, everyone knew about it. And Waldheim is telling me that as a staff officer with Army Group E, he didn't know about it. What did General Löhr and the other officers do when they were relaxing in the officers' casino every evening? Did they say "watch out, here comes Lieutenant Waldheim, we had better shut up about the Jewish deportations, we don't want him to know?" This whole business is bloody ridiculous. We are talking about a man whose only claim to a political career is that he was a supporter of Schuschnigg — the leader of a clerico-fascist regime!'

Outbursts like this are rare at press conferences but during his five minute plea, Alfred Hrdlicka, the Viennese sculptor, had the assembled journalists in fits of laughter and was rewarded for his contribution with a spontaneous round of applause. The laughter came partly out of a sense of guilt, as Hrdlicka has said what so many observers of the Austrian presidential elections feel, but do not dare express. The Waldheim debate is absurd.

In any other European country, a candidate campaigning for the highest political office in the land, would have resigned a long time ago after the revelations of the past few weeks, which have proved beyond doubt that Waldheim has been systematically covering up his past. But behind the tourist brochure image of an Alpine paradise lurks a curiously insecure national psychology. On Sunday the Austrians will be going to the polls to elect their president in a contest which threatened to be a colourless campaign between two of the most tedious Austrian politicians to surface since the war — the former UN General Secretary Kurt Waldheim and Dr Kurt Steyrer, a man who had traded in his fiery radicalism of the '50s for a more staid model of political vacuity, which corresponds precisely to the needs of the Socialist Party.

The central theme which the two main candidates debated before Waldheim's past became an issue was which of them could do more for the reputation of Austria abroad. Since the maverick Chancellor Bruno Kreisky departed from the political scene, Austria's international profile has all but disappeared, save the occasional wine scandal. The country would like to see its reputation as an honest reconciliatory broker in international affairs restored. Waldheim's candidature, however, is having the opposite effect.

THE PAST OF ONE man is naturally a much easier target for research than that of a whole nation, but Austrians have reacted sufficiently nervously to suggest that many perceive the allegations against Waldheim to be an attack on the country as a whole. Instead of now wishing to embrace the world, they feel it necessary to retreat into a defensive nationalism in the face of unwarranted interference in the affairs of a sovereign state.

'For many Austrians the phrases World Jewish Congress and World Jewish Conspiracy are easily confused', one journalist said three weeks ago as Austria's latent anti-semitism was surfacing fast. While the Austrians are not entirely unjustified in regarding their country as the victim of Hitler's aggression, they have also used this to cover up powerful pan-Germanist and anti-semitic traditions which were merely swept under the carpet at the end of the war. In the past month, anti-semitic cartoons have appeared in a tabloid daily newspaper; the chairman of the Austrian People's Party, which supports Waldheim, has singled out members of the World Jewish Congress as vengeful slanderers, and the electorate has been constantly reminded by posters on every street corner that 'We Austrians will vote for who WE want to'.

Waldheim's advertisers are now also demanding 'Fairness for Waldheim'. With this he is asking why he in particular is being picked on. For his lapses of memory about his activities in the Balkans he is no more culpable than the majority of Austrians of his generation who have done the same. His one problem is that he is running for the highest state office. It is almost certain that Waldheim will be elected, if not on Sunday then in the second electoral round on 8 June. His relationship with Prime minister Fred Sinowatz of the Socialist Party will be awkward. Like all leading politicians Sinowatz has been careful not to accuse Waldheim, but he has gone further than any other in pointing out that his candidature is causing some doubt about Austria's reputation abroad.

However, in practical terms only one country, Israel, is likely to seriously consider refusing President Waldheim entry. Sources inside the US confidently predict that Edwin Meese will reject the recommendation of the Justice Department's special investigation which advised that he should not be granted a US visa in the event of his election.

The real loser of the election is Austria itself. The past, suppressed for so long, has returned with a vengeance. The vote for Waldheim will be a vote to forget the uncomfortable memories which prickle the conscience of many an Austrian.

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LETTERS

Direct actions on Libya

Sushma Lal, Manchester

The bombing of Libyan cities by Reagan with the connivance of Thatcher continues to be a matter of public debate. It is time the peace movement realised that condemnation alone, however vigorous, it not enough. Something more practical is called for. For example, a boycott of US goods and services. It is a matter for CND to issue a list of the products which can be boycotted by ordinary people who feel helpless in the face of the stubbornness of the US and British regimes.

When the Korean jet was shot down by the Russians, some trade unionists, especially at British airports, refused to serve Aeroflot, making their life very difficult. There is no reason why a similar action cannot be taken against the Americans, unless, of course, British trade unionists maintain one standard for friends and another for foes.

Why the poor are fleeced

Clement Dixon, London E5

Since John Denham's article (*NS* 18 April) attacked the instruments of the transfer of wealth from Latin America rather than its causes, it arrived at no real proposals for the solution of the current debt crisis.

The IMF, dominated as it is by monetarist ideologies, has imposed austerity measures on debtors that have been both counter-productive and inhumane and British banks may indeed be partly to blame for this. However although Lloyds, Barclays, Nat West and Midland are four of the agents of the 'fleecing of the world's poor' its causes lie in the factors that have caused the combination of high interest rates and global economic depression and also in the existing international structures for trade and finance. Long-term solutions to the problems of recovery and development must include radical changes to those structures and this can only be effected by the world economic community as a whole.

Short-term measures to ease the crisis should include the rescheduling of debts at concessionary interest rates and the writing off of some debts altogether. However the funds necessary for this must ultimately come from taxation (including, of course, taxation of the domestic banks' obscene profits). To expect institutions whose reason for existence is to maximise their shareholders' dividends to behave altruistically is fanciful.

Muesli Left

Steve Cohen, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The term *Muesli Left* in the headline above your article on nuclear power and John Cunningham (*NS* 18 April) bore little relevance to the article and betrayed a prejudice that ill becomes the *New Statesman.*

Before using such a 'clever' tag in future it may be worth remembering that one of the main reasons the Rochdale Pioneers set up their first co-operative shop was because they were sick (almost literally) to death of buying food adulterated with chalk and sawdust. The fact that a new generation is waking up to the dangers of the more subtle chemical adulteration of food by today's more sophisticated larger companies is something the labour movement should welcome.

Apart from that, however, it should not be assumed that the anti-nuclear and wholefood lobbies are one and the same. Both could be won to Labour's cause as they are fighting the vested interests the Labour Party should oppose.

Of course you could always claim that *Muesli Left* meant something made up of many bits and pieces which it would be healthy for the Labour Party to take on board. But that would be being too clever by half.

Fowler fowls the NHS nest

Roland Petchey, Sheffield

Phil Cohen (*NS* 18 April) correctly identifies a number of disturbing implications of the recent management reorganisation of the NHS following the Griffiths report. However, one aspect he appears to have overlooked is the scale of Ministerial intervention in the round of general manager appointments currently being concluded.

In spite of having conceded to the Social Services Select Committee that Health Authorities would have considerable discretion to implement Griffiths in the light of local circumstances and needs, Norman Fowler eventually resorted to insisting on personally vetting all short-lists of applicants for District General Manager posts. This was followed by a series of overt Ministerial interventions in the form of vetoes of recommended appointments or insistence on changes in the composition of short-lists. Admittedly, such incidents occurred in only 10 per cent of the 219 appointments made up to September 1985, but it is undeniable that they will have served to 'encourager les autres'.

This exercise of Ministerial patronage and other more recent developments, such as Fowler's refusal to reappoint Health Authority chairmen who had opposed government policy, and his imposition of curbs on local authority nominations to health authorities, make it quite clear that we are witnessing the wholesale politicisation of NHS management and a further twist to the spiral of centralisation.

Opportunities for democratic participation in the NHS have always been woefully inadequate, which is why a return to 'consensus management' will not, of itself, be sufficient, since 'consensus management' was little more than a smokescreen for domination of decision making by vested clinical interests. The various changes set in train by Griffiths serve simply to make the NHS even less accountable, and to render more imperative the need to devise a counter-strategy.

Male

Amanda Dytch, Manchester

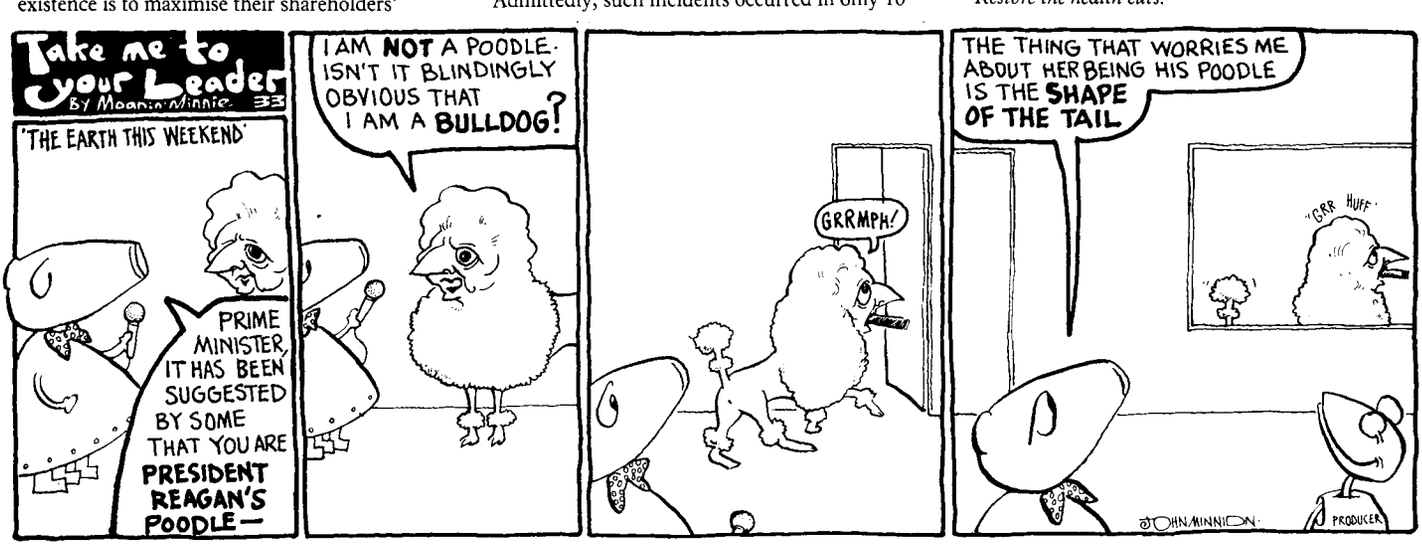
I was puzzled by your motives in publishing Kathy Acker's obscene short story (*NS* 25 April). Were you conniving with her in administering a short, sharp shock to your readers' sensibilities or was it a serious exercise by a woman writer attempting to get inside male sexual fantasies? Because the story seemed to be entirely an exercise in fantasy and was set in no context, it was impossible to judge.

I challenge whoever was responsible for seeing such a nauseating piece of writing into print to give us, your increasingly disillusioned readers, some explanation as to why they thought this was such a fine piece of writing that it was imperative for the *NS* to carry it.

Labour's missing the point

John Rose, London NW5

'Brevity can aid clarity,' writes Peter Kellner (*NS* 25 April). How true. How interesting, then, that Labour's 'clear, precise and relevant' health policy so lucidly summarised in 50 words in the *Freedom & Fairness* literature should so conspicuously avoid a clear, precise and relevant commitment to the oh-so-easy-to-grasp principle and phrase: *Restore the health cuts.*


Take me to your Leader
By Moan'n'Minnie 33
'THE EARTH THIS WEEKEND'
PRIME MINISTER, IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED BY SOME THAT YOU ARE PRESIDENT REAGAN'S POODLE—
I AM NOT A POODLE. ISN'T IT BLINDINGLY OBVIOUS THAT I AM A BULLDOG?
GRRMPH!
THE THING THAT WORRIES ME ABOUT HER BEING HIS POODLE IS THE SHAPE OF THE TAIL
GRR HUFF
JOHN MINNION
PRODUCER

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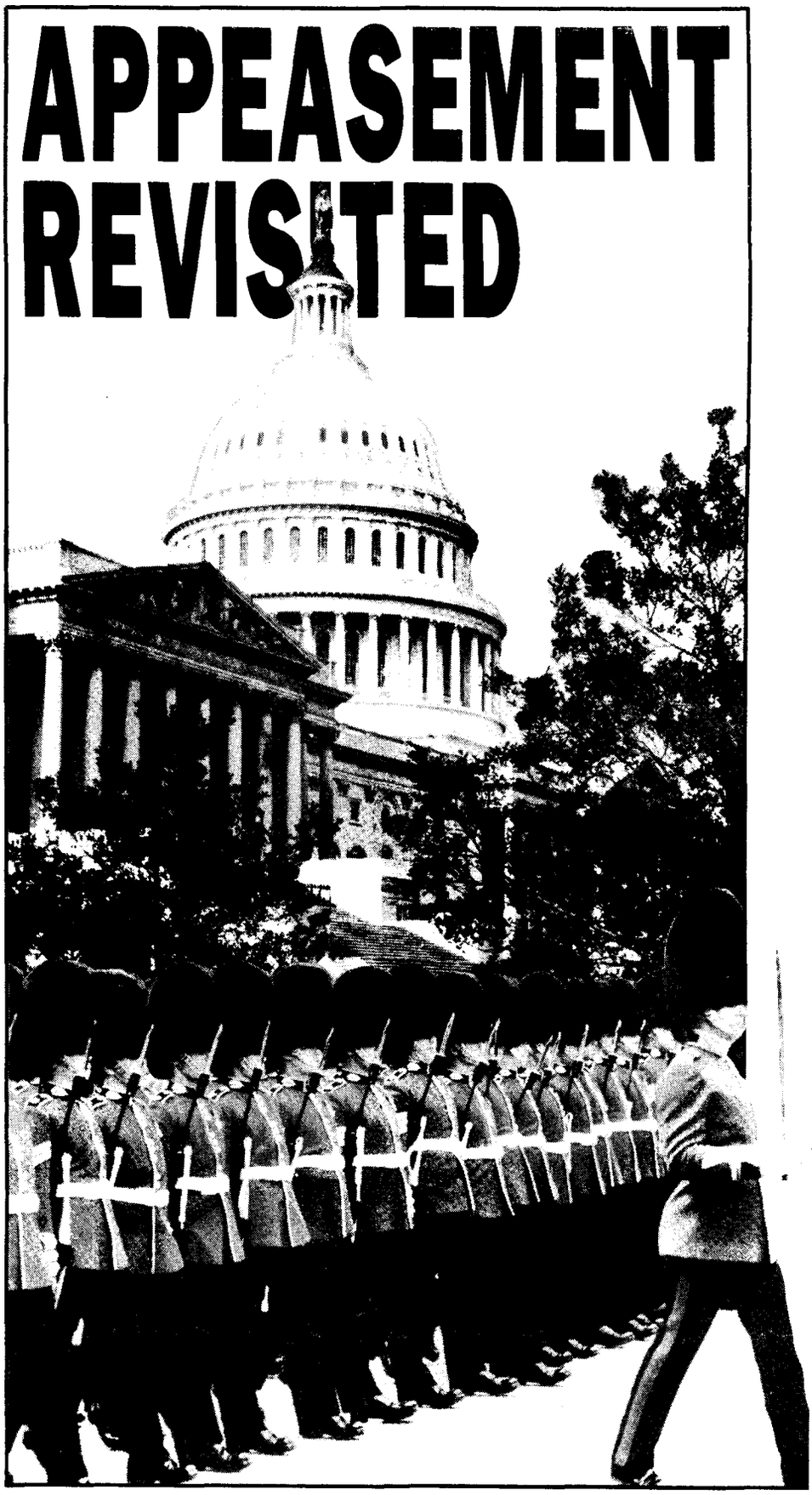

It will end in contempt by one party and resentment by the other, said Kinnock of that special relationship. GWYN PRINS lays out the rules for a fresh start

WHAT PRICE British independence now? As the bombs dropped from British-based American aircraft exploded in Tripoli, an unexploded bomb was suddenly pitched into the centre of the British political arena where defence questions are not usually to be found. This bomb has painted on its side the message 'Maggie loves Ronnie'. The task of dealing with it is fraught with electoral danger for all the main political parties. How will they try to tackle it?

The main issue which the Libyan raid (still in the singular as I write) raised about Mrs Thatcher's conduct of defence and foreign policy is not new. It is only newly visible. Most of the electorate seems to have reacted badly to the astonishing carelessness for the national interest which they saw in her agreement to Mr Reagan's bone-headed plan. But the same defect had only shortly before been seen in the Westland affair. There, in addition, Mrs Thatcher's Government gave an impression of a capricious lack of direction and of shifty incompetence as well. Yet in truth, each of these three qualities may be seen running throughout current defence policy.

At root, there is a continuing basic failure to address the real world, signalled by its grandiose obsession with posturing in the North Atlantic with Polaris and Trident and in the South with (I wince as I write) sheep. This produces consequent grave damage, both now and even more in prospect, to real defence requirements; for it is mad indeed to copy the Mad Hatter trying to force the Dormouse into the teapot, by trying to force five major military commitments — three engaging, more or less, the world as it is (see below), two engaging British delusions of grandeur (see above) — into a budget which even under Mrs Thatcher cannot grow and that can only sensibly accommodate the sensible three.

It is the schizophrenia of the present Government's view of the United States which gives pattern to the apparent incoherence of its defence policy. The classic illustration is the contradiction between a petulant assertion of 'independence' in the *theory* of the strategic nuclear force and a dependence upon the USA for its maintenance in *practice*, a dependence which has tended to increase historically and will become effectively absolute if Trident is ever commissioned.

The schizophrenia was extensively aired on *both* sides of the House in the Commons Libyan debate on 16 April. And that is the point, for the present Government merely reflects long established views of America in the British public at large which extend

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from the very beginning of the post-war period when Attlee built the British Bomb. It is a mixture of love and hate. From that time to this, while scorning the uncouth Yanks, governments of left and right have been prepared to pay very heavy prices and to trade substantial chunks of British sovereignty for a fanciful belief that they could thus retain a 'special relationship' which might enable them to temper the adolescent excesses of the Americans: wise Greeks to the headstrong Romans.

It has been a spectacularly bad bargain. From Korea to Suez to Grenada and now, via Lakenheath to Libya, the Americans have done exactly what they want. Even in the halcyon days of the 1960s there is no sign that the British role was ever formative. And for these bitter fruits, we postponed for more than two decades the recognition of our European identity which is, for better or worse, our principal identity in a post-imperial world and jeopardised our economic well-being, which is the real measure of international influence: not bombs and far-flung bases. If Britain is ever to have a sensible defence policy, the relationship with the United States must be rethought from Square One, along with the relationships between nuclear weapons and security and defence and foreign policy respectively.

ON PRESENT SHOWING, the Tories will never be up to the job. Their deeply romantic creed is too much entangled with the illusions that have to be cut down. Furthermore, they believe that they understand defence, whereas the last time that the Tory Party thought seriously about the subject was in 1957. They reacted to the Americans' ruthless and successful curtailment of the Suez adventure with Duncan Sandys's Defence White Paper putting even more eggs in the nuclear basket. It would be nice to think that they could catch up, but it is probably asking too much.

The SDP/Liberal Alliance is unlikely to be able to do it either. It does not have a consistent policy at present because the Liberal Assembly and Dr David Owen respectively do have quite specific defence policies, and they are incompatible. The SDP fudge is just that: if there is a good reason to keep a British nuclear force, it would be silly to keep the rapidly ageing Polaris boats, exponentially costly on refit, and to cancel Trident; for by 1987 the hard fact is that there will be no real saving to be made by cancellation, given the sunk pounds and cancellation costs that will be then standing. The only consistent positions are to get rid of both Trident and Polaris or to follow through Thatcher's policy of replacing 'obsolete' weapons.

So who is left? Will the Labour Party please stand forward? The *Labour* Party? After the initial shock during which the reflex images of woolly-hatted idealism and fraternal scrapping subside, a moment of reflection reveals why it was always most likely that the Labour Party would be the one to produce that fundamental revision of the axioms which have held sway in British defence policy for forty years.

A VIOLENT DISCONTENT with the present state of international relations is essential to provide enough momentum to overcome the encrusted inertia of ideas and of vested interests (that's you, Sir Humphrey) which will resist reform. Equally, that idealism must be guided by a clear-sighted understanding of the world as it actually is, not as it appears when doubly distorted by post-imperial myopia squinting through the bottle-bottom lenses of nuclear deterrence, which fill the viewer's sight with towering Evil Emperors.

Clive Ponting, who knows more of Whitehall behind closed doors than most, warned in the *New Statesman* (7 February 1986) that unless all the main policy issues and a good deal of the detailed implications have been thought through well before taking power, the chances of an incoming Labour Government overwhelming the entrenched hostility of the Mandarins to achieve its desired permanent realignment of defence policy within a five year term will be slim.

The Labour Party policy-makers appear to be aware of this. Unobtrusively the process has begun. Shortly after being elected to the leadership, Neil Kinnock cut the first Gordian knot when he made it unambiguously clear that from the very first day of the incoming administration, the process of decommissioning the nuclear weapons which Britain owns would begin. There would be signals to the Fleet. Polaris would be called in from patrol. The era of Britain's post-imperial nuclear delusions would end. As Ponting observed, only an immediate start would give sufficient time for the technical processes of disposal to be accomplished. At a stroke, one of the issues which had given Labour's opponents an instrument with which to torture it during the 1983 election evaporated. Give or take a twitch of the eyebrow, hardly anything has been heard of it since.

Then in 1984 the Labour Party Conference adopted the framing document for defence and security policy *(Defence and Security for Britain).* This set out in general terms the interrelationships between the different aspects of a reformed defence policy. It spelt out the aim of a reform of NATO from within, some of the detailed implications for the posture of our forces under such a reform and a preparedness to match forces to resources in a militarily sensible way by cutting entire roles (nuclear forces, 'out-of-area' commitments) in order not to damage by salami tactics — a sliver off here and a sliver off there — the roles that are actually required (Defence of the Home Base, the Eastern Atlantic and the Central Front).

Now, in the last few months, the process has gone further. Last November in a speech little remarked at the time, before a military audience at the Royal College of Defence Studies Neil Kinnock returned to the fundamental issue of the nature of security. 'As a component of security,' he said, 'defence policy is crucial, but it is not everything. There is probably no error more profound and misleading than to believe that a military *defence* policy — however sound — is all there is to a *security* policy. The security that depends on arms alone is dangerously fragile . . .' And nuclear weapons, he said, had no part in British defence policy.

Narrowing the focus, he then related his definition of security to the need for coherence both within British defence policy and between defence and foreign policy. A pivotal aspect of this was the vital task of rescuing the NATO Alliance from its present degenerate form as a system of deferential clientage to the United States. For, as Kinnock put it, as it now operates 'it pampers the superior, it weakens and vulgarises the inferior . . . It is not a suitable arrangement for friends, for friends exist to give irritating advice as well as genial support. And, however a relationship of deference begins, it usually ends in contempt by one party and resentment by the other.' The European voice within NATO is distinctive, he said, and under Labour, Britain will join with the continental partners in their demands for reform '. . . that could require little more than the re-assertion *in practice* of the specification in words of the North Atlantic Treaty which, after all, is a document committing member countries to alliance as sovereign states.'

In February, the twin pillar was added when Denis Healey published his view of what replaces nuclear deterrence as the organising principle of foreign relations *(Beyond Nuclear Deterrence,* Fabian Society Pamphlet No. 510). Upon these two essential foundations Labour's defence policy will rest. Healey took as his text President Reagan's 23 March 1983 'Star Wars' speech, in which he explained how nuclear deterrence was morally obnoxious and must be replaced. Reagan came up with a batty and dangerous answer, but, Healey observed, that doesn't mean that he asked the wrong question.

Together, these documents compose the most extensive discussion of the principles and future practice of defence at present offered to the British public by any political party. But it is evident that while much of what Ponting requests has been provided,

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there is still vagueness which will have to be dissipated before the next election. The most important cloudiness to which Ponting draws attention is to the issue of British sovereignty and the future relationship with the United States.

Kinnock strikes Mrs Thatcher at one of her most vulnerable points in drawing attention to her careless custody of our interests in dealings with the Americans within NATO. In doing this, he appears to be explicitly rejecting the temptation to ride a wave of atavistic anti-Americanism. There is no doubt that the wave is there to be ridden, and that it might have significant short-term electoral gain. But on what beach would it land us? Say we robustly throw the Yanks out of Britain, every last one of them. The American ultra-Right rejoices and the American liberal establishment is undermined. There would be widespread popular support in the USA for America pulling out of NATO, leaving the no-good, smart-ass, Commie-loving Europeans to stew while, in global isolationism, the US 'builds strength'.

But the Europeans do not stew. A European Third Bloc emerges, dominated by a Franco-German nuclear force. The Soviets look at all this and go quietly bananas. Are we then more or less secure?

SO WHAT DOES Labour mean by the commitment which in its vagueness more than any other bothers both liberal Americans and sympathetic members of Her Majesty's armed forces: to 'take appropriate action to ensure that the US Government removes its nuclear weapons' and to 'regularise the presence of the other US forces in Britain'? *(Defence and Security for Britain).* The Libyan episode has thrust this question to the front of ever more minds. If Labour is not to be impaled and endlessly roasted on the spit of defining which bases, which weapons and why not these, those or the others, a clear answer must be given, such as was given on the issue of the British owned nuclear forces.

What is really at issue here is *not* primarily a question of nuclear weapons. At root, it is a question of *control.* So the key word is 'regularise'; and the Exchanges of Notes in the early 1950s are not enough to merit that verb. We therefore have to return to the terms of the Treaty, defining an organisation of sovereign nations equal in status. Upon returning to power, Labour should undertake to negotiate immediately and place before Parliament an open Treaty with the United States that would replace all the secret Exchanges of Notes and what-not — we know not what, which is much of the problem — which currently govern the presence of US forces in Britain. That would be no great precedent; other NATO partners have treaties of that sort. The central terms of the Treaty would be exceedingly simple: US forces would be present within the United Kingdom on exactly the same terms that British forces may be present within the United States.

The American Declaration of Independence had much to say about standing armies placed unjustly on American soil, and since 1812 Americans have not experienced any attempt to station foreign troops in their continental nation. In 1812 they showed vigorous disapproval of the idea. One has only to look on the one hand at the care with which the makers of the American Constitution confined the exercise of military power (Article I, Section 8; Article II, Section 2; the Second and Third Amendments) and on the other, at the rising tide of American isolationism, to realise that in the nuclear age American political culture would not permit the *de facto* surrender of sovereign control of American land to a British nuclear base controlled independently of the US President and Congress. Equally, no American officer could surrender control of an American nuclear weapon and not be in breach of his Oath of Service unless the Commander-in-Chief ordered him to do so which, on past precedent, is inconceivable.

So the immediate effect of such a treaty would be to cause the Americans to remove their nuclear weapons from British soil, along with anything else which they were not prepared to see subject to a physical British veto, which could be exercised if arrangements were not consistent with a reformed NATO European strategy. There would be a question about nuclear weapons on ships in ports and in territorial waters which could be addressed in the subordinate clauses of the Treaty. But the essential points are first, that the Treaty should, like the North Atlantic Treaty, express fundamental principles, and second, that the precise choice of which American hardware should be here would be quite properly American, not British.

It is hard to imagine Liberal MPs, and many independent-minded Tories, not supporting such a Treaty. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander; and if it turns out that it isn't, and that the Blessings of Liberty promised in the Constitution are only for domestic American consumption, then we'll know something important about American attitudes which might call for a further re-examination of how to structure European security. But I cannot conceive why we should wish to go into such uncharted and potentially more turbulent waters if we can, in fact, navigate to our destination by a more obvious route. And we shall not know if that route is impassable unless we try. □

Gwyn Prins is a Fellow in history at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He was a member of The Labour Party's working party on Defence and Security.

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POETRY

More to it than saying 'bollocks'

John Lucas

The Interrupted Dream
TIM DOOLEY *Anvil Press* £4.50
Lovely Day for a Wedding
JOHN WHITWORTH *Secker* £3.95
Against the Storm
SEANE DUNNE *Dolmen Press* £3.95
Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis
WENDY COPE *Faber* £7.95 & £3.95
Praying Wrong: New and Selected Poems 1957-1984
PETER DAVISON *Secker* £6.95

THERE OUGHT to be no such thing as poetic language. True, people have searched for it, much as some have sought the philosopher's stone, and with as much success. Roman Jakobson tried to use linguistics as a 12-stage process by means of which you could arrive at the ultimate distillation of the purely poetical. It's an attempt typical of reactionary modernism, whose secret credo reads 'A poet is a man not speaking to men', and it finds its appropriately absurd emblem in the shape of those members of the Greek Academy in Athens who think that a respect for 'pure' Greek (*katharevousa*) entitles them to speak for Greek culture even though they can't speak to anyone but themselves. It's a project for Laputa. Unfortunately, this is where a good deal of contemporary English poetry belongs.

> The optimists of agitprop
> rehearse in the co-operative restaurant awaiting
> their notice to quit.
> The year is closing in and news of friends arrives.
> The schoolboy radical has joined the Ministry of
> Defence.
> The born-again Christian contemplates
> adultery.
> How they disappoint us — these parodies of
> betrayal.
> It is too near my own corruption — a lethargy
> that fudges every act. Convictions cancelling
> each other out, until we cannot imagine change
> —
> only an empty planet, this passive mind erased.

These are the closing lines of 'The Strange Conversions', from the title sequence of Tim Dooley's volume, which he calls 'A Journal 1975-1982'. 'The best lack all conviction' Yeats famously wrote and you could, I suppose, see Dooley's poem as an example of that claim. But this is only to say that it's trapped in its own enervate sophistication. 'We cannot imagine change.' Well, no, not if you put it that way and certainly not if the 'optimists of agitprop' (ho, ho) are said to be 'awaiting their notice to quit'. Awaiting! Dooley would like us to believe he speaks for others (us?). 'How they disappoint us' he says. But the language of his poem is so mannered, so much a snickery, self-approving chumble, that it ends up being in love with its own *accidie*, cultural and political, as well as spiritual. This is the language which separates out 'us' from 'them'. This is 'poetical' language.

There would be no point in making this criticism if Dooley were a no-hoper. **The Interrupted Dream** is the work of someone who is capable of much better writing than he's actually produced in this first volume. But it won't happen until he stops watching himself being clever, and above all this means renouncing a language that seals him off from the necessary infections of dailiness.

It isn't the kind of remark you could imagine directing at John Whitworth. **Lovely Day for a Wedding**, like his previous volumes, makes much use of the demotic. It's hairy-souled and every time you turn the page you imagine that a poem will leap up and hit you with a cry of 'filthy Mozart'. 'Beata's had it to the eyebrows/With poeticising highbrows,' Whitworth writes in the long poem 'Careless Love'; and what's true of Beata is true of the poet. Or so it may at first glance seem. But Whitworth is in fact a very accomplished technician: a flash-Harry rhymer almost as good as Kit Wright, and Ewart-like in his readiness to work in a variety of forms. *Lovely Day for a Wedding* is an enjoyable read, even though the street language sometimes turns out to smell of the study (e.g. 'Taking of the piss': wrong, quite wrong, and not to be excused because it's needed for the metre). More importantly, however, when you re-read it you begin to see that the more ambitious poems are actually sentimental. Thus 'The last word' of 'Careless Love' ends:

> I have a pretty son. He takes the bus
> To school where he is doing pretty fairly.
> I have a dream where I dance naked on
> The dew-soaked grass, but not in Wimbledon.

My objection to this is less that nobody uses the phrase 'doing pretty fairly' than that the dream condescends to the woman who is supposed to be speaking. There's more to breaking through the barriers between 'us' and 'them' than saying 'bollocks' even if, or perhaps because, you rhyme it with 'Pollux'.

Sean Dunne would never do anything so unmannerly. But **Against the Storm** is, I'm afraid, drearily predictable in its poetical manner: all gentle melancholy, dying falls and faded rhythms.

Clockwise from top left: Davison, Dooley, Cope and Whitworth

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Lovely the women of suburbs in summer
Sitting on doorsteps to talk in the sun,
With their hair-dos and magazines on lives of the famous
And their children amok in the gardens.
('Doorsteps')

More sentimentality, more condescension. What are the women *saying*, for god's sake? And what are the hair-dos, and which magazines are they reading? This is poetry as Jason Strugnell might write it. And indeed here, in **Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis**, we have the Strugnell poems, as mediated through the parodic talent of Wendy Cope. The sonnets in particular stand up well to a re-reading as does 'A Policeman's Lot', her properly witty riposte to Ted Hughes's remark that 'The progress of any writer is marked by those moments when he manages to outwit his own inner police system.' Yes, there *is* some truth in it, but its woozily aggrandising romanticism deserves the comeuppance of 'It's enough to make a copper turn to booze (turn to booze) — Patrolling the unconscious of Ted Hughes.' At its best, parody is a kind of creative criticism; and the best of *Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis* ought to be required reading for male poets who pride themselves on their unique sensibilities and linguistic refinements, on being 'us'.

There is also a very good case to be made for putting Peter Davison on the required list. Poem after poem in his generous selection, **Praying Wrong**, shows how well he uses his talent for story-telling. His opening lines are particularly good: bait that draws you on until you're hooked. He can be a bit twinkly-eyed on occasions: like a hoary Frost, full of folk wisdom. 'Nobody knows how much to make of barns,/certainly not a barn as old as this', one poem begins ('Barn Fever'); and another sounds as though it could be Strugnell limbering up to do his Frost poem: 'Something lay hidden deep within the mountains./I don't know what. Perhaps it could be love.' ('Creatures of the Genitive'). But these, even if you add to them some odd, clumsy phrasing, are minor flaws. They don't take away from Davison's achievement. *Praying Wrong* is a solid, well-crafted body of work which ought to last.

In at the birth

Chris Mullin

Breakfast with Mao
ALAN WINNINGTON *Lawrence & Wishart* £12.50

IN 1948 THE general secretary of the British Communist Party, Harry Pollitt, received a request from his opposite numbers in China — where the revolution was on the brink of triumph — for an adviser to help brush up the English language bulletins of Chinese Communist News Agency, Xinhua. Pollitt sent Alan Winnington who also doubled as a correspondent for the *Daily Worker*.

Winnington spent the next decade reporting from China and Korea. His access to the new China and its leaders was unique among foreign journalists. Winnington and the late Wilf Burchett (an Australian) were also the only Western journalists to report the Korean war from the *North* Korean side.

His account of the Korean war is fascinating. Those were the days before Vietnam and Watergate, when most Western journalists retailed the official handout version of events as uncritically as their colleagues on *Pravda*.

When Winnington and Burchett appeared from the northern side at the truce talks in Panmunjon and started giving accurate briefings to their colleagues on the other side of the line, they caused a sensation. Day after day they exposed the lies being fed to the Western media by the American briefing officers.

The Americans became so upset that they leaned on the British and Australian governments to withdraw the passports of Winnington and Burchett. Such was the hysteria that a British (Labour) cabinet even considered hanging Winnington for treason should he reappear within their jurisdiction.

As a result he had to spend the next nine years living in China where he watched with growing disillusion the megalomania of Mao Tse-tung destroy the great gains of the early years of the revolution. His account of these years is a mixture of sadness and good humour.

Although a dedicated Communist, Winnington was not a hack — unlike most foreigners who had privileged access to China at that time. Faced with the madness of the Great Leap Forward and its aftermath, he spoke up. As a result, he found himself increasingly at odds with his colleagues on Xinhua who, in the best Chinese tradition, were ducking and weaving with every twist and turn in the official line.

Since his services at Xinhua were less and less in demand, Winnington took to travel. He reached parts of China that no other foreigner has reached before or since. In 1955 he spent months travelling in Tibet. He was there again in 1959, just after the abortive uprising, and was probably the last foreigner to see the old society more or less intact before the terrible destruction wrought by Great Han Chauvinism upon the Tibetan way of life.

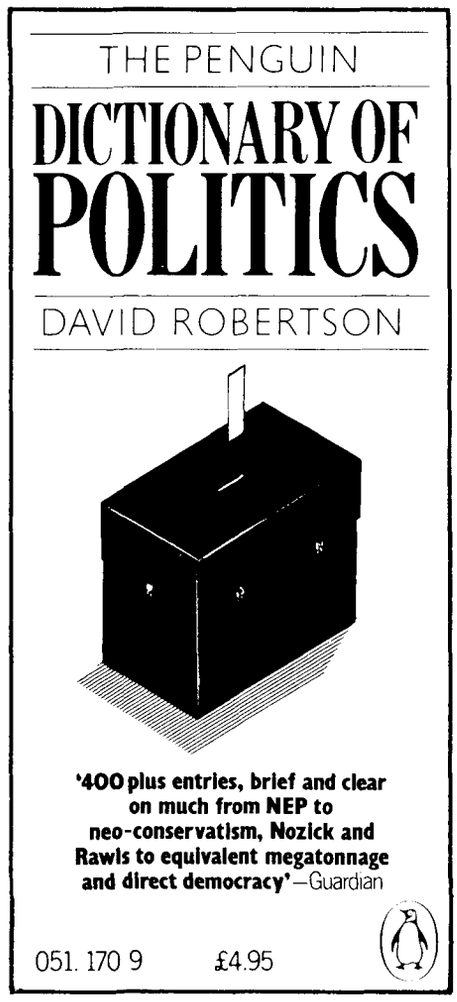
As the drift towards fanaticism — which culminated in the Cultural Revolution — gathered pace, it became clear to Winnington that his services were no longer required in China. Unable to return to Britain for fear of arrest, he retired instead to East Berlin where he died in November 1983. This memoir, unfinished at the time of his death, was completed by his widow.

The importance of being Ernest

David Montrose

Hemingway: A Biography
JEFFREY MEYERS *Macmillan* £16.95
Along with Youth: Hemingway, The Early Years
PETER GRIFFIN *Oxford* £12.95
The Young Hemingway
MICHAEL REYNOLDS *Blackwell* £14.95

LAST YEAR, Jeffrey Meyers edited *The Craft of Literary Biography*, a collection of essays by 13 practitioners of the genre. In his introduction, he attacked the 'superficial school' which, rather than attempting 'sympathetic intuition', presents 'an external view through an encyclopedic accumulation of facts'. Since one of those arraigned was Carlos Baker, whose *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* has been adjudged the standard work since 1969, Meyers's own enterprise arouses the expectation of a different approach at the very least. And, sure enough, he duly proves more inwardly-directed than his predecessor and more selective. In neither case, though, is the outcome a marked success.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The great flaw of Baker's biography, as Irving Howe remarked, lay in providing no sense of its subject's intellectual and spiritual life: the source of his art. That Baker also refrained from interpreting Hemingway's (frequently objectionable) behaviour counted for less because his motivations were seldom elusive, usually arising from an urge to dominate and a hunger for unreserved admiration. Meyers, however, has addressed the minor gap, and none too convincingly when prospecting beyond long-settled matters: Hemingway's competitiveness and mythomania, his growing need for sycophantic cronies and alcohol, the pernicious effects of fame on his character and talent. Meyers specialises in identifying recurrent psychological patterns. A few are familiar and incontrovertible: the literary friendships that began with enthusiasm and ended with vengeful disillusionment, for instance, the self-exculpatory revisions of the past; several others, though, notably the supposed influence of war and physical incapacitation on Hemingway's love affairs and marriages, appear shakily based on slanted readings of coincidences. Still more dubious are the occasional ventures into Freudianism. Hemingway's adult life was punctuated by a chain of accidents and illnesses, culminating in the suicidal depression which precipitated his death (an appendix, indeed, is devoted to chronicling these indispositions). From this catalogue of affliction, Meyers plucks three mishaps and — on the sole grounds, apparently, that they occurred within 12 months of Hemingway's second marriage (to Pauline Pfeiffer) — diagnoses them as 'probably connected' to guilt over abandoning Hadley, his first wife. A potent emotion, this, since it induced a cut on Hemingway's foot to become infected, his baby son to stick a finger into his eye, and a skylight to fall on his head. Elsewhere, the celebrated incident when a suitcase containing nearly all Hemingway's early work was stolen from Hadley is attributed, on no evidence whatsoever, to her subconscious desire to lose 'the manuscripts that had kept them apart, day and night'.

While far from representing an acute case of documentary surfeit, Baker's opus might profitably have been shorter than its 859 pages. At two-thirds that length, however, Meyers's undertaking seems rather undersized given his endeavours to cover ground avoided by Baker: not only psychological interpretation, but also literary analysis (having already published *Hemingway: The Writer As Artist*, Baker eschewed repeating himself). Certainly, the biographical particulars are not quite dense enough for a really substantial portrait. Mind you, Meyers does provide some noteworthy new material, including the suggestion that Hemingway's late-life conviction that the FBI was keeping tabs on him was not entirely delusional.

Michael Bayley

Nightmare

After she died,
he thought of the horse
they'd always denied her,

even heard it one night,
clip-clopping the landing
in her mother's shoes.

Twenty years of table calls

Tell daddy grub's up.
Tell dad lunch is on the table.
Tell your father his lunch is
getting cold.
Tell him if he wants something to
eat
there's still some shepherd's pie
leftover from yesterday.

Apropos Hemingway's writing, Meyers's research into sources proves more valuable than his criticism. He has unearthed the true story behind 'The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber' and reveals how Hemingway partly modelled Colonel Cantwell, the embittered hero of *Across the River and into the Trees*, on his British friend, General 'Chink' Dorman-Smith, whom Churchill unjustly demoted in favour of Montgomery during the campaign against Rommel. Also considered is the fiction by Martha Gellhorn, the third Mrs Hemingway, which drew on their courtship, marriage and divorce. As a critic, Meyers's foremost acts are to argue for the magnitude of Hemingway's youthful indebtedness to Kipling for his 'technique, tone, themes and code of honour' and to round off the modern practice of downgrading Gertrude Stein and Sherwood Anderson as influences on his early style. Meyers even denies Stein the traditional honour of having taught the young contender the value of repetition.

While Meyers's effort falls well short of superceding Baker's, it is by no means a negligible achievement. The author has assembled his material scrupulously and conspicuously departs from even-handedness only when showing a distinct affection for Hadley (his evaluation of the suitcase affair notwithstanding) and a parallel dislike for the supplanting Pauline. That the portrait of Hemingway which emerges is a decidedly warty one — charting his degeneration into 'the swaggering hero of the thirties, the drunken braggart of the forties [and] the sad wreck of the late fifties' — cannot be ascribed to authorial severity. A final niggle, though: Meyers commits a number of straightforward factual errors, most embarrassingly when he lists Dashiell Hammett — who wrote no fiction after 1934 — as first among those influenced by the 'tough-guy passages' in *To Have and Have Not* (1937).

Peter Griffin and Michael Reynolds belong to the sponge-cake school of biography, expanding their basic ingredients — Hemingway's life before he and Hadley embarked for Paris in 1921 — with liberal infusions of hot air. Reynolds is the more gaseous, stuffing his narrative with reams of quasi-sociological data on Oak Park, the genteel suburb of Chicago where Hemingway grew up. Less lavish with background, Griffin — whose volume is the opening instalment of a projected triple-decker — supplies abundant biographical minutiae, quotes letters at inordinate length and incorporates the complete texts of five previously-unpublished early stories (only one, 'Crossroads', possesses more than curiosity value). Each book, though, does have some things of worth amid the excess baggage. Both Baker and Meyers skim over Hemingway's premarital relationship with Hadley, and it is useful to learn more, even at the cost of learning, especially from Griffin, far too much. Above all, Reynolds conducts a telling reappraisal of the tensions between Hemingway's parents, portraying a progressively difficult marriage — unlike Meyers, who describes it as 'essentially happy' — which he attributes mainly to the husband's mental problems, unlike Hemingway, who blamed his hated mother ('an All-American bitch'). But then, I suppose, every sponge-cake has at least a little filling. □

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FICTION

The long of the short

Richard Deveson

The Lightship
SIEGFRIED LENZ *Methuen* £8.95 & £2.95
The Inner Man
MARTIN WALSER *Deutsch* £9.95
Doing the Voices
JEREMY BROOKS *Viking Salamander* £9.95
The Killjoy
ANNE FINE *Bantam* £8.95
The Girls
JOHN BOWEN *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95

THERE SEEMS to be a prejudice in Britain against the long 'short' story. It's difficult to understand why this should be, since a story of intermediate length can be substantial enough to be more than a suggestive anecdote and yet compact enough to deliver a powerful allegorical punch. But in German the form lives on, and Siegfried Lenz's **The Lightship** is a post-war fable about fascism that irresistibly recalls Thomas Mann's classic *Novelle, Mario and the Magician*. The story was first published in 1960; the translation (by Michael Bullock) has been reissued now to catch the coat-tails of the film. Whether *that*

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will irresistibly recall the story is a matter known, at the time of writing, only to God and CBS Productions.

A Baltic lightship picks up a gang of runaway criminals who try to force the ship's captain to weigh anchor and help them escape. The members of the crew are all for taking action against the gang but, when they try, the criminals outwit them. The captain wants to play a waiting game, but his options are gradually eliminated until he is forced into a test of his ultimate principle: that he will not abandon his anchorage. It becomes apparent, without any use of heavy Germanic orchestral effects, that the lightship is a symbol of civilised order and security, and that the moral dilemma facing the crew is the choice between opposing armed tyranny by heroism (and risking failure-by-martyrdom) and opposing it by cunning (and risking failure-by-inaction).

Unlike Mann, who shows how a population can let itself be bewitched by demagogy, Lenz has his tyrants simply arrive and take over at gun-point: his story isn't a very subtle allegory of the origins of fascism. On the other hand, he shows tellingly how the criminals, once installed, in a sense become the crew's prisoners as well as its overlords. And the logic of this double stranglehold drives the story forward to a bleak and windswept climax. Resistance to fascism is possible, and is necessary, and may well prove fatal.

Martin Walser is another German writer who has been prominent in his own country since the 1950s — a fact which, despite valiant efforts by translators, has done him little good over here. **The Inner Man** (translated by Leila Vennewitz) provides a good opportunity for readers to make amends. Xaver Zürn, a chauffeur, has to drive his industrialist boss the length and breadth of the Autobahn system on business trips. He is forced to spend long nights on the road; his life and thoughts are of little interest to his employer on the back seat; and, worse still, he is so demoralised, trapped, obsessed and constipated by his position of subordination and by the depression he transmits to his family that he prevents himself from seizing any tiny chances that do arise of showing his boss that he, too, actually exists.

Maybe no man is a hero to his chauffeur, but Xaver comes close to turning his boss into one, and that (allegory again) is the trouble. He is the *kleiner Mann* who has been rendered impotent by the system. The book ends neither in revolt nor despair but in an acceptance of impotence which Walser leaves deliberately ambiguous: Xaver may have won a private victory, but, equally, his sense of victory may actually be the final delusion that makes the system's domination complete.

As it happens, British amends can be made towards the long story as well this week. The title piece of Jeremy Brooks's **Doing the Voices** is an excellent example of the genre, a curious but believable picture of a grotesque 'stately home' where everyone is a sham, from the arriviste owner, with his toast to the staff at 'yet another Christmas gathering', to the 'Estate Steward', a failed circus clown. Another story, set in North Wales in the summer of 1940, catches the somewhat fevered mentality of a gang of teenagers who don't know whether they want to play commandos in readiness for a German invasion, or play boy-chases-girl, or recognise that they're playing games and begin to grow up. Brooks never strives for effect; his ear for speech is unerring. Congratulations to his publishers for defying the anti-*Novelle* prejudice.

And so to two murders. At a time when mere life produces more than enough death, fictional additions to the corpse mountain aren't especially easy to take. Anne Fine's study of a sadistic obsession in **The Killjoy** would be more instructive if we knew *why* the girl was prepared to fall in with the fantasies of the fusty, disfigured Scottish professor. (She can't have been entirely a creature of his — well-described — infatuation.) The novel has a subtle humour and is highly readable, but there is a distinctive unpleasantness about being made to witness the grisly death of someone who has never quite lived.

The grisly death in John Bowen's **The Girls** seems to be meant to be a bit of a giggle, involving as it does a septic tank, a pig in a china shop (the bulls — bullocks, actually — are in the back garden), some Forsterian Pan-whimsy, a libidinous policeman and other assorted bits of rural-life idiocy, all going on in leafy Warwickshire. The corpse ends up amid 'gunge and shit', its 'white bum glistening in the dark'. Funny people, some novelists. □

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Shorter reviews

Ireland's Field Day
FIELD DAY THEATRE COMPANY
Hutchinson £10.95 & £5.95

The Field Day Theatre Company was founded in Derry in 1980 by playwright Brian Friel and actor/director Stephen Rea with the aim of contributing to 'the solution of the present crisis by producing analyses of the established opinions, myths and stereotypes which had become both a symptom and a cause of the current situation'. It is a bold project and a remarkable one which has no contemporary English analogue.

The pamphleteers are pre-occupied with de-mythologising Ireland's culture and politics and their method — most are dons — is erudite and complex. This is not the pamphleteering which philosophises with a hammer. Tom Paulin writes on the Ulster language, many of whose words (as occasionally baffled readers of Paulin's own verse can testify) are unrecorded in any dictionary and lead a secret life which, combined with the absence of 'a tradition of good critical prose', has led to 'a living but fragmented speech, untold numbers of homeless words and an uncertain or derelict prose'. Seamus Heaney writes a verse letter to Motion and Morrison who had the impudence to include him in a Penguin anthology of contemporary *British* poetry. He makes a fair (and shrewdly self-critical) point but reminds us that Fuller and Fenton are rather better at this sort of thing.

The other pamphleteers, Seamus Deane, Richard Kearney and Decland Kiberd, keep returning to a running quarrel with Yeats which points to the direction these writers wish to take, away from the high romantic idealising strain in Yeats (or Pearse) and towards a more critical, modernist, rational but rooted culture — what Deane calls 'new writing, new politics, unblemished by Irishness but securely Irish'. Whatever one's view of the validity of this approach (which Edna Longley has recently called 'simplified and unreal', basing her argument on the shaky populist premise that Yeats is not among 'the forces that truly affect people's lives'), for anyone who cares to understand the condition of contemporary Irish writing and politics the productions of Field Day are indispensable.

Nicholas Murray

The Camp David Accords: A Testimony
MOHAMED IBRAHIM KAMEL *KPI* £25

Memoirs of people in power throw penetrating light on history. In the Middle East we have had a fair crop of them from the Israelis and the Americans, but only a poor harvest from the Arabs. The most notable in the latter category are Mohamed Heikal's *Sphinx and Commissar* and Anwar Sadat's *In Search of an Identity,* though the latter work is fatally marred by the public relations gloss on it.

Now comes a memoir by Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, a former Egyptian foreign minister, which, although limited in scope, is unpretentious, honest and balanced. Since the author was foreign minister from December 1977 to September 1978 — a period when the foundation for peace between Egypt and Israel was laid — he gives an insider's account of the decision-making in Sadat's court.

Kamel had known Sadat since the early 1940s. Working closely with Sadat in the latter's peace negotiations with Israel, Kamel came to have a poor opinion of the Egyptian leader. 'Sometimes Sadat's thinking could be clear and logical when he would discourse at ease, at other times he would be incapable of speaking or pointing out what he wanted or stating his point of view, or he would digress into side issues,' he writes. Kamel found Sadat a man of whims, acting on the spur of the moment without proper consultation.

Israeli leaders had built up a detailed profile of Sadat's personality and psyche: a precious asset to which Henry Kissinger and Ezer Weizman had contributed generously.

The culmination of the Egyptian-Israeli peace talks came in early September 1978 at the Camp David resort in Maryland. The conference started with Sadat declaring that he would sign no agreement on Sinai before reaching one on the West Bank and Gaza and ended with Sadat doing the reverse, and in the process unlinking the two issues. What caused the crucial change? A meeting between Moshe Dayan, Israeli foreign minister, and Sadat, arranged at the behest of the Americans.

Dayan told Sadat bluntly that no Israeli leader could relinquish Israeli settlements and airfields from Sinai since Israel's security depended on them. Sadat realised that if he could not recover Sinai from Israel he was doomed at home. 'From then on Sadat became embroiled in a series of concessions,' reveals Kamel. 'This ended in his total capitulation, and he finally appended his signature to what Israel, in its wildest dreams, never imagined possible.' Kamel did the honourable thing. He resigned.

Dilip Hiro

Promised Land
JENNY PEARCE *Latin America Bureau* £6.95
Women of El Salvador
MARILYN THOMSON *Zed* £16.95 & £5.95

Promised Land charts the growth of the peasant movement in El Salvador. At great personal risk, Ms Pearce visited Chalatenango, travelling with the guerrillas, often under fire, recording oral histories wherever she went.

Health and education had been very neglected in Chalatenango and its largely unfertile land was unsuitable for coffee production. So the local peasantry lived in great hardship, undernourished, mostly illiterate, 'land-poor', in a feudal relationship with their landlord/employers and often victims of brutal state repression, yet fatally passive.

The strength of Ms Pearce's book is that she illustrates the transformation of that backwardness, the 'conscientisation' of the peasants through a newly radical Catholic Church and participation in genuinely popular revolutionary movements. Their passivity has gone for ever with the realisation that they deserve — and mean to attain — a more equitable deal.

The book is readable as well as meticulously researched. Ms Pearce does not hide her sympathies for the peasants and guerrillas, yet, when describing the democratic organisations that are changing irreversibly the lives of the people, she is not afraid to be critical. An uplifting book.

Women of El Salvador is dedicated to the memory of Marianella Garcia-Villas, President of the El Salvador Commission for Human Rights, who was assassinated two years ago. Knowing that women are largely invisible in El Salvador, she had suggested the writing of the book.

Based on interviews with women living in Mexico as refugees, it shows what El Salvadorean women's lives are like and why they become involved in the revolutionary process. Are women's lives any different in the zones controlled by guerrillas? How important is feminism there? Ms Thomson discusses these issues in the first book of its kind.

Valerie Kaye

DANCE

Natural philosophy

Stephanie Jordan

A pleasantly utopian backwater or a fountainhead of regenerative activity? Dartington's dance-for-everyone approach gives rise to a number of questions

WHEN ASKED, during an interval at the Dartington Festival, did she not think a certain performer excellent, a glazed-eyed dance person replied that, with all this Libya business, what the hell was everyone doing watching people, however excellent, prancing about on a stage in deepest Devon?

Hanging around Dartington, there is the pervasive odour of wholemeal bread and banknotes. Through the valley of a thousand BMWs have spread converted mills, tweed and pottery factories, glass, craft and health food shops, all inspired by the admirable example of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst who established the Dartington experiment over 50 years ago. This pioneer attempt to stem the flow of population and industries from the land provided agriculture for people's physical needs and education and the arts for their spiritual ones. It remains a model world with a utopian vision, a model for restoring the arts to the centre of life and making connections between the different components and activities that constitute a community.

A disagreeable side-effect is the sense of being in a classy, reclusive village with an impeccable social conscience that is never put to the test. From here, Tripoli and Terminal One feel remote indeed, so the unidentified spokeswoman was right to sense the dangerous complacency of this backwater setting.

Yet dance at the College has for years proved the source of much of the best and most radical activity in this country, a part of the theatre programme, thriving on the special Dartington qualities. With a view of educational bureaucracy and processes both peculiar and imaginative and, since 1973, the inspiring leadership of American Mary Fulkerson, Dartington has received vital and energetic injections from outside. Important US post-modernists were in residence in the Seventies, bringing ideas barely surfacing in London. Then there are the annual dance festivals which, since 1978, have attracted artists from the US and Europe as well as England and teaching visits from ex-students and 'friendly performers'.

Dartington's democratic, idiosyncratic vision of the function of the arts finds its expression in fiercely anti-establishment work: far to the left, feminist, anti-racist commentaries, with performances at venues

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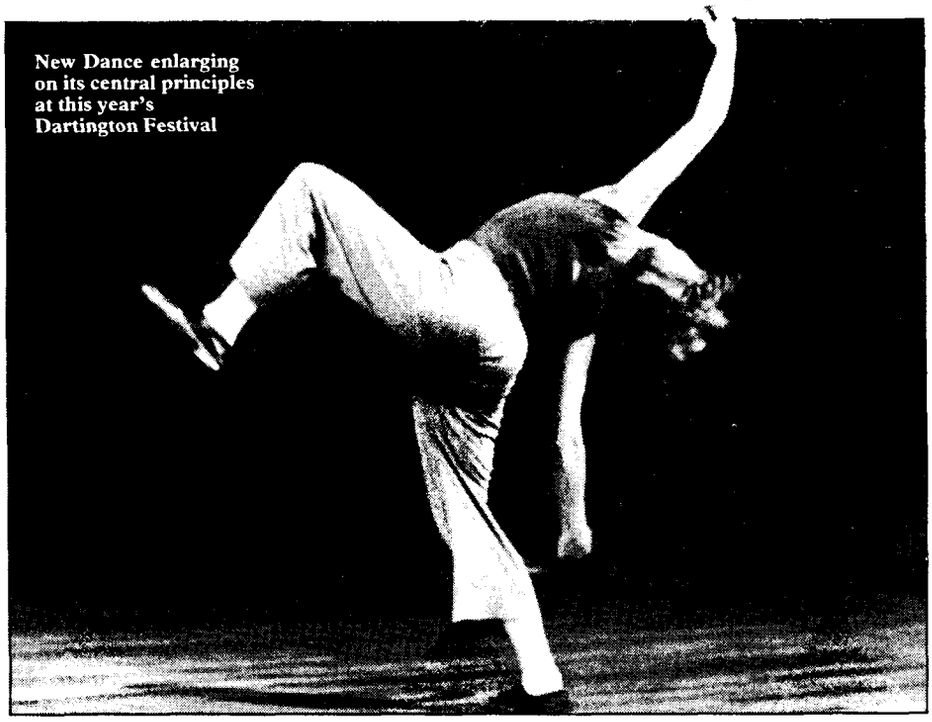

New Dance enlarging on its central principles at this year's Dartington Festival

like Labour Party meetings in Weston-super-Mare and programming of community projects in Rotherhithe and Plymouth. Most regularly, these concerns manifest themselves in a non-technical everyman/woman approach to movement, relaxed efficiency over a pedestrian stance and the rough-and-tumble duet form known as contact improvisation which is largely self-taught, a participatory 'artsport' that can engage young and old, men and women on equal terms. This dance world demonstrates too that awkwardness, plumpness and weightiness can be politically potent and a refreshing antidote to the skinny uniform of ballet. Dartington's peace and isolation and Fulkerson's strong central vision have allowed such an approach to flourish without conflicting distractions.

London's New Dancers soon spotted connections with their own aesthetic and have made the pilgrimage to Dartington since the mid-Seventies. Those who know the place and who sympathise with the nature of the work have a habit of returning, to teach, to perform, to study.

The annual dance festival is largely a reflection of or complement to Dartington's present dance culture, but it's also the occasion when a cross-section of the whole of British New Dance looks to itself. There's rarely a stretched foot here and little attempt at drama beyond personal experience. Dance is for everyone: the pressure to achieve is off and the barriers between artists and audience dissolve as performers become students become audiences. Classes abound, the atmosphere is friendly and uncompetitive. Here is a celebration of what the unstyled body can do and a study of real, human, often autobiographical concerns.

Alas, 1986 was no vintage year. Most pieces shown were spineless, ill-formed, apparently pointless, but rapturously received by the like-minded, friendly audience. Such work, now that there is so much of it, can be as clichéd as the forms it rejects, merely a vacant response to a formula.

Yet there were artists who demonstrated that enlarging upon principles central to New Dance and Dartington philosophy remains a challenge. This year these were the artists working and known since the Seventies: the generation that bred the forms initially has understood their potential.

I'm thinking first of the American Steve Paxton, founder of contact and frequent visitor to Dartington, in his sardonic improvisation to the first 15 of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*: rippling, swirling and skating in animated conversation with its rhythms and ornamentations, or simply rolling in a big circle, reversing back to centre as the music cadences. Later, Paxton joined in a contact jam with Julyen Hamilton, Kirstie Simson, Daniel Lepkoff and Carole Swann. The virtuosity is expressed by sharp and friendly wit, seeing an idea through, interfering, encouraging or suddenly giving way to another adventure. These are performers who demonstrate on-the-spot decision-making in performance.

Meanwhile, Rosemary Butcher has taken New Dance principles into minimalist abstraction, in *Flying Lines* her movement pared down to the simplest travelling steps and arm gestures but made thrilling by complex layering of individual tracks and *presto* performance. Jacky Lansley, once founder member of London's first New Dance collective X6, applied a fine theatrical economy to *The Breath of Kings*, in which a dark lady (Lansley) goads two inert gents behind newspapers into the courtly scene of Norfolk's and Hereford's banishment in Shakespeare's *Richard II*. She speaks their words; they are complaisant puppets. Unlike most other contributors to the festival, Lansley knows exactly how to make words and dance reverberate, and here they become ironic foil for her independent feminist statement.

These are artists who continue to question the identity and functions of dance in our society. They demonstrate the importance of such a festival and justify the values of Dartington.

MUSIC

Curio

Andrew Clements

Doctor Faust
BUSONI *Coliseum*

FAITHFUL READERS may remember a review of a concert performance of *Doctor Faust* when it was mounted by the BBC several years ago. Then the likelihood of a fully staged version seemed remote, but now it has joined the English National's repertory, produced by David Pountney and complete with a newly reworked final scene by Antony Beaumont, whose study of Busoni was published by Faber last year.

Busoni left the opera incomplete at his death in 1924; it was subsequently finished by his pupil Philip Jarnach and in that version has been widely performed and recorded. Beaumont's completion is based upon recently discovered schemes worked out by the composer shortly before his death, in which he details the works from which he intended to draw material for the opera. The sources it employs are utterly different from those used by Jarnach, and it gives the ending a totally different feel, more positive and conclusive. Whatever the rights and wrongs of each version in musicological terms, there's no doubt that on the stage Beaumont's ending is altogether tauter and more effective.

But what comes before that last scene is very variable. Anyone who knows the score from records or concert must have pondered over the viability of much of the action in the theatre; Busoni's music is so wide-ranging stylistically, its fondness for academic forms so obvious, that the overall dramatic shape is hard to sustain. The early sections are fine; problems only begin to arise when the action moves beyond the straightforward confrontation between Faust and Mephistopheles and into the real world; the killing of Gretchen's brother, Faust's affair with the Duchess of Parma, both lumber along without reaching a convincing climax, and the events of the final scenes are too protracted to draw the threads together satisfyingly.

But the evening almost gets by as a stage spectacle, even though it begs the question as to whether ENO was right to lavish a fully fledged production upon the piece or whether it might not have fitted better into their series of budget productions designed for a single run of performances that included *Rienzi* and, most recently, Rossini's *Moses*. Pountney and his designer Stefanos Lazaridis work minor miracles with the first scenes: the action is transplanted to the 1920s, with Nazism beginning to grow in Germany and Faust as a scientist who seems to be fathoming the secrets of the atom, perhaps working towards nuclear fission. There are enough stage effects and brilliant strokes of imagination to keep concentration; later even their ingenuity flags,

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and the conjuring tricks at the Mantuan court and the events of the last scene, including Faust's death and his rebirth in the person of the Duchess's resurrected son, are messily rendered and totally without the economy and directness that characterise the opening.

Perhaps because one becomes used to the conventions of the production through the evening, the quality and relevance of the music gradually begin to matter more, and then the difficulty that is endemic to Busoni rears itself again: for all the fantastic flights in his writings about music, he was congenitally unable to deliver the same imagination in his own. In *Faust* neobaroque passages lie alongside much more advanced harmonic adventures; elsewhere authentically modernist understatement is contrasted with music that is directly descended from the 19th-century musical view of Faust, as found in Berlioz and Liszt. The score is fatally punctuated by these linguistic twists and turns, so that the force of the vocal lines is constantly undermined.

Undoubtedly though ENO has assembled an excellent cast for the occasion, led by Thomas Allen's Faust, a compelling mixture of obsession and cowardice, whose final victory over Mephistopheles seems almost unwitting; Mephistopheles himself is sung by Graham Clark whose energy and acute vocal characterisation are enormously impressive if, unlike me, you can take the basic aggressive edge to his voice. Eilene Hannan is a fully fleshed out Duchess; Mark Elder conducts an account of the score that pays careful attention to detail and to Busoni's occasional flashes of brilliant orchestration. The number of revivals of this production is going to be limited, so anyone who collects operatic curiosities or simply is fascinated by the *culs de sac* of 20th-century music ought to catch this while they can. □

RECORDS

Schubert: Winterreise, Piano Sonata in C
SCHREIER, RICHTER *Philips* 416 289-2 (two CDs)
The partnership of the greatest living pianist with the foremost *Lieder* tenor recommends itself. Peter Schreier and Sviatoslav Richter's account of *Winterreise* is taken from a concert in Dresden last February; despite the persistent backdrop of hacking coughs the performance is a marvel of concentration, of acute musical imagery in the piano part married with an exquisite range of vocal colour. Many familiar songs are often taken surprisingly slowly — Richter seems to favour a very measured, contemplative view of Schubert — but the effect is never mannered or contrived and balance is provided by the occasional very swift tempo. No singer could hope for a more sympathetic partner than Richter, or a pianist for a tenor who can phrase more eloquently and with such control as Schreier. On compact disc the songcycle is coupled with Richter's incomparably broad view of the unfinished C major Sonata, recorded at a concert in Leverkusen, West Germany, in 1979. Where most pianists tend to dispatch the torso without too much gravity, he transforms it into a substantial and profound experience.

Dvorak: Piano Quintets
RICHTER, BORODIN QUARTET *Philips* 412 429-2
More live performances — Richter has always viewed the sanitised atmosphere of the recording studio with suspicion and increasingly his new discs have emerged from concerts. Here is not only the well known Piano Quintet Op. 81 but also the early Op. 5 Quintet; both works are in A major. Op. 5 is perhaps only a piece for collectors of Dvorakiana; no one could claim it represents the composer at his best or most characteristic. Yet the great Quintet is given a renewed vitality, with the piano part invested with undimmable life and energy and a tone which never obscures the string quartet even in the most strenuous passages. The Borodin in its latest incarnation is a superlative group, about to embark upon a Shostakovich cycle in London; it manages to match Richter for intensity and to phrase with almost equal memorability, and that should be sufficient praise in itself.

Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Liederkreis Op. 24
FASSBAENDER, GAGE *Deutsche Grammophon* 415 519-2
Anyone who heard Brigitte Fassbaender's Wigmore Hall recital last summer, which included the Op. 24 *Liederkreis*, will know the kind of intensity she brings to each song she tackles, the intelligence with which she approaches words and their meaning. There are more beautiful mezzo-soprano voices to be heard today,but none that is deployed with such perception. Those who expect female singers to be neutral, prettifying instruments will not warm to Fassbaender; hers is emphatically a positive musical personality, intent on imposing itself upon its material. Some passages in both of the Schumann cycles emerge with a sharper focus than I have experienced before, occasionally at the expense of smooth, sweet tone. Her partner Irwin Gage is well chosen, for he is also intent on extracting the maximum expressive poundage from his lines. Four further Heine settings are included as a bonus; the imagery in these is equally vivid, the mood of each perfectly caught.

Andrew Clements

FILMS

I am a camera

John Coleman

Zina (15)
Gate, Notting Hill; Metro
Shadey (15)
Screen on the Hill; ABC, Fulham Road
Flesh and Blood (18)
Cannons, Haymarket, Charing Cross Road, Piccadilly and Baker Street
The Jewel of the Nile (PG)
Leicester Square Theatre; Odeons, Kensington and Swiss Cottage; Cannons, Oxford Street and Chelsea; London and SE release

IN A WEEK over which it might otherwise be more seemly to draw a shroud, a film that at least tries to 'make it new', to exploit the medium rather than the audience, inevitably stands out. To be honest, Ken McMullen's **Zina** can scarcely be said to *jut* from the screen, a couple of surreal images apart, but its technique shows far more address than his previous, numbing feature, *Ghost Dance*, with its chic little French intellectual Jacques Derrida mouthing complacently.

What's addressed here is anyway of more substance and interest: the troubled psyche of Leon Trotsky's elder daughter by his first marriage, undergoing analysis in Berlin in 1931-2; the festering city and times in which she lived; and memory-excursions into the past, most notably the nine months she spent restlessly with her father and entourage in exile on a Turkish island. It was her wayward demands on Trotsky's attention, while he was trying to write his famous *History*, as well as her resentment of his new family, that resulted in the despatch to Doctor Kronfeld in the

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

A Room with a View Palpable hit by uncommonly literate-visual Ivory-Merchant-Jhabvala trinity, exquisitely matching their meet to Forster's 1908 barbed, poised, pagan and wittily resonant shake-up of class-crossing Edwardian amour, via Florentine trip, for awakened young Lucy (Helena Bonham Carter, Maggie Smith, Denholm Elliott, Daniel Day Lewis).

No Surrender Liverpudlian black stuff, seamed with horror and hilarity, as Alan Bleasdale's vivid OAPs, rival Protestants and Catholics, are misbooked into sleazy, crook-owned club with harassed new manager (Michael Angelis) for New Year's Eve celebrations and confrontations. Peter Smith directs (Bernard Hill, Joanne Whalley, Ray McAnally).

Clockwise Zany any-road movie début by prime farceur Michael Frayn, writing time-obsessed comprehensive head John Cleese into calamity-strewn race to Norwich conference, driven in dad's car — and out of and into his wits — by truant girl pupil, towards higher-lunacy finale. (Sharon Maiden, Alison Steadman).

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Germany of Hitler's Brownshirts. McMullen intimates that a lot of research has gone into the patchwork incidents of his film, with its 'threefold narrative dynamic which is carried by a stream of political prophecies, private premonitions and coincidences'.

Clearly, a seriously conceived project; and its prevailing sombreness is lit by few flashes of humour or gaiety. (One of these finds an island visitor — André Breton? — draping a fish across his skull to delighted cries of 'Mussolini!'. It is this same fellow who is to caper like an ape, once merrily, once to emit a shattering, primal howl.) Zina, the striking Domiziana Giordano of Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*, has black-and-white sessions with rarely speaking Kronfeld (Ian McKellen), reproaching him for a silence akin to her beloved father's, suggesting Trotsky has proposed he should treat her so. These sessions, when Zina hammers at her essential hollowness, talks out erotic encounters with a bandaged, blind man, fantasises, weeps and utters Cassandran pronouncements, are the dislocated backbone of an ambitious occasion, fleshed with colour passages on that island, in an art gallery (which abruptly translates from a roomful of forbidden abstract paintings to walls hung with the Stalin-worshipful socialist-realist canvases Trotsky can be heard, and sometimes seen, deriding), back to her childhood when she, a two-year-old, was scared and scarred by a dummy she found in her papa's bed: he had already fled.

Much play is made with voices over: hers, Kronfeld's, that of Trotsky (Philip Madoc). Ominous parallels with Antigone and classical myth are drawn (the stand-bys of psychoanalysis). Fragments of Berlin realities — Nazis beating up a fellow in the street, Zina waiting in drizzle for her trolley-car — fuse into images of sex (the coupling of her brother and his wife) and horror (Zina lost in volcanic wastes, approached by a hooded figure — that Trotsky-dummy? — which bursts into flame).

It is during the reading of a letter from Zina to her father, which moves audaciously about in time and place as writer, recipient, analyst, all participate in its pleading, that the viewer's own memory may return to a film from last December, Hugh Brody's powerfully extraordinary *Nineteen Nineteen*, and feel that McMullen's *Zina* — by being at once cryptic-elliptical *and* simplistic (Zina's jealous admiration for her father, preoccupied with larger matters) — has less to offer than meets the eye. The importance to Trotsky of Zina's 'eye' as a Berlin-observer, the trust he placed in it: these might have been more explored.

Philip Saville has directed Snoo Wilson's absurdist black farce, **Shadey**, as if the chuckaway dialogue were graven on tablets; that's the prime failing of this uncertainly jokey piece, which Channel Four financed and will presumably show in due course. Anthony Sher makes a confidently diffident screen debut as shock-headed Shadey, a broke car-repairer who wants cash for a sex-change operation and, as he thinks, trades his gift (of filming in his head events clandestine home and abroad) for the ready. But Sir Cyril (Patrick MacNee), with a barmy, coal-eating wife (Katherine Helmond) and a sexy, incestuous daughter Carol (Leslie Ash), turns the human candid camera over to the Secret Service (mainly Billie Whitelaw as a butch doctor). Kidnapped MacNee loses an ear, Sher his balls and the romp me. The promise of the initial premise is rapidly vacated

With such gems as *Turkish Delight* and *The Fourth Man* behind him, Amsterdam-born Paul Verhoeven has proved he can turn his hand to anything. His latest anything, **Flesh and Blood**, set in Western Europe, 1501 (*not* a good year), is a ludicrous, often repellent and intermittently pornographic costume-catastrophe about mercenaries ransacking

Sher waste of talent in *Shadey*

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Full house

Naseem Khan

IF THERE'S ONE THING you don't expect to find, as the train chuffs its way sedately beneath the grey-green overhangs of the Rhondda Valley, it's a theatre — and not just any old small, apologetic, arts-centreish theatre, but a great big thing with classical pretensions rearing its height massively above the adjoining buildings, PARK AND DARE WORKMEN'S CLUB 1913 cut proudly into the pediment.

The pits have gone from South Wales's Rhondda (except for Mardy, some miles away). The hills are bulgy with lumps of old, buried mines; Treorchy's Park (or Parc) and Dare pits themselves closed down 15 years ago. But the theatre, part of a complex that contained miners' welfare, library and recreational rooms and paid for out of miners' donations, lives on. Not as a dodo or a curiosity, but as a living, kicking, energetic theatre.

It might not seem so at first, on a damp spring early evening. A few yards away, by the small station, some kids are kicking a ball around on a damp, muddy pitch, watched by two grubby sheep. But inside the foyer it's all bustle, queues pushing and shoving rudely round the sweet stand and the entries to the auditorium: a good-sized auditorium, three-tiered, from stalls to gallery, and a good old-fashioned proscenium arch looking down on the 800 red plush tip-up seats. And a full auditorium with loads of people, many of them women, busy settling themselves, ripping open sweet packets, shouting at friends. We're surrounded, it seems, by formidable granny figures — not your meek little grannies, but battleships with bouffant hair-dos and thick specs and rows and rows of indomitable gleaming NHS teeth and the absolute certainty, determination, that they're going to have a good time.

Perhaps it's the knowledge of what the play that night is going to be. For its mixed touring and amateur programme, The Parc and Dare generally plays to 85 per cent capacity. But that particular night was part of the run of the Parc and Dare Theatre Company, a seven-year-old amateur company formed specifically to stage the plays of Frank Vickery. A favourite son of the Rhondda (born in Treherbert just up the road), 34-year-old Vickery works in a local furniture factory. In his spare time, he writes impressively able plays (going by my experience for that night and cuttings — 'Ayckbourn of the Rhondda'—for others).

The play of the night is *Through and Through*, a revival of a 1979 play and, like all Vickery plays (except for his disastrous first one, a one-acter about a pit accident), a comedy. But it's comedy with an oddly abrasive ring to it. Wildly funny on the surface, Vickery's plays try to reach down to areas he describes as 'taboo'. They touch on death (*One O'Clock from the House*); mental handicap; homosexuality (*Easy Terms*); old age (*Family Planning*). At base, however, they seem to derive their energies from the ways in which the constraints of family life — his are all family plays — rub against other imperatives, while simultaneously nourishing and sustaining.

Through and Through is set in the back garden of a local terraced house. Here, members of Vickery's extended family come and go: to reminisce before the (shotgun) wedding of younger son Gareth to Shirley; to get a breather at the boozy wedding party; to spar over the fence with the ubiquitous neighbour Mrs Morris and — an important part of the plot — to go to the lavatory; the outside toilet's by the back door. The new joint family life obviously leads to tensions ('Not that I'm interfering, mind,' lies Gareth's matriarchal mother magnificently, before going on to order the new couple's life), but that's not the main problem. At the root is the fact that Shirley finds Gareth's flashier older brother Kenneth irresistible and is not sure — as she admits to him in an early scene — whether the baby she is carrying isn't the result of a single drunken screw with him. Unbeknownst to both of them, as they wretchedly part, the door of the lavatory opens. Gareth had been there throughout.

As the months to the birth go by, the outward surface looks quite normal. There are jokes and gossip and a funeral. But the unexpressed fury breaks out regularly between the two brothers, particularly when — irony of ironies — the steady Gareth loses his job. In the end, with another surprise revelation, the moral seems to be that it's not who your parents are but who your family is that matters. Written with a fine combination of deep feeling and surface wit ('I think,' said Vickery later, 'a playwright has something to say but never actually says it'), and played with great ability, *Through and Through* had its audience eating out of the palm of its hand. In fact, Brian Meadows's chief job as director was banking down his audience's jollity for more serious passages.

Through and Through (the title is colloquial for living in an extended family) certainly has its roots deep in the Rhondda, but, like good wines, Vickery's plays have proved that they can travel. Last year the company boldly took London's Duke of York's Theatre (and will do so again this year) for a night. They spent all the previous evening leafletting outside other theatres, with a persistence that paid off. A good-sized house responded much as the Rhondda had done ('I've proved,' said Vickery modestly, 'that, though I'm regional, it still works,') and those critics who took a chance wrote approvingly. And why not, asks director Meadows staunchly: Hull Truck's work is regional and gets a hearing, so why not Parc and Dare? There's no question but that they amply deserve it. □

THEATRE

Half seas over

Benedict Nightingale

HMS Pinafore
GILBERT AND SULLIVAN *Old Vic*
Watching
JIM HITCHMOUGH *Bush*

IT SHOCKS ME that more hasn't been done to revivify Gilbert and Sullivan since the old partnership's release from the artistic tomb in which a fell blend of copyright and D'Oyly Carte had hidden it. More precisely, it shocks me that more hasn't been done in and by its native country. First, there's Joe Papp's big, buoyant revival of *The Pirates of Penzance*, a triumph on Broadway before its reincarnation at Drury Lane. Then there's nothing that I, an unabashed G and S fan, care especially to remember until — well, until Joe Dowling's present production of **Pinafore** at the Old Vic, which comes from Dublin.

Perhaps it takes an alien eye to spot what we, accustomed to reverent attempts meticulously to clone the Savoy originals, have managed somehow to miss. The Americans brought out the fun, the zest, the verve, and the Irish are emphasising something even more important, the satirical impishness. They, of all the world's peoples, are entitled to take a sceptical view of English smugness, English pretensions, English hypocrisy; and *Pinafore* cocks snook after snook at just those commodities. Isn't the Ruler of the Queen's Navy actually an opportunistic and faintly corrupt landlubber, appointed because 'I grew so rich that I was sent by a pocket borough into Parliament, I always voted at my party's call and I never thought of thinking for myself at all'? Doesn't he grandly preach egalitarianism, to the extent of reproving the captain who fails to preface an order with 'if you please', only to load with chains and dispatch to a dungeon the honest tar who covets his fiancée?

But the Irish at the Vic do rather more than bring out such self-evident inconsistencies. The running joke of the performance, one they take decidedly further than Gilbert himself, is that the British navy is by no means the butch castles, raping half-witted well-born maidens, catching the plague — the 'bubonic' kind, it is pointed out — and generally torturing and eating disgustingly. 'Let's have a sing-song,' bawled by a doxy, nicely catches the period flavour of a script by Verhoeven and a fellow-Dutchman: double Dutch? Lewis Teague's **The Jewel of the Nile**, a mirthless sequel to Robert Zemecks's *Romancing the Stone*, this time sends romantic novelist Kathleen Turner and her playboy-lover Michael Douglas to Moroccan locations, where they trek across their just deserts interminably. The album features the new Billy Ocean hit, 'When the Going Gets Tough', and seven more characteristically Nilotic ballads. □

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institution of Nelsonian legend and Palmerstonian practice. The ship on which the opera is set, the *Pinafore* herself, is flamingo pink and apt to wobble when too beefily clambered over. The chorus of tars, in chic blues and whites, are svelte young things who look as if they'd be more at home in a Chelsea wine bar and certainly seem happiest when they're high-kicking in unison, like parody Tiller Girls or Rockettes. The treat they get for good conduct is not Gilbert's 'grog' but Horlicks. The hero, Ralph Rackstraw, is played by William Relton as a sweet, pale, androgynous lad stepped out from a pre-Raphaelite painting. And Alan Devlin's Sir Joseph Porter, the Ruler of the Queen's Navy himself, can no more keep his hands off him than he can off any passing thigh or bum, whatever the gender of its owner. 'Desire that splendid sailor to step forward,' he salivates, and for one marvellously preposterous moment it seems that things may be moving to more than a theatrical climax on the quarterdeck.

It's very jaunty and sportive, as indeed is everything else about the production. Even poor Devlin's well-publicised eccentricities — didn't he once walk out of a performance with a snort of 'fuck this, I'm off to the pub'? are good-humouredly recalled in teasing asides by Paul Bentley, who himself makes an entertainingly improbable Captain Corcoran, all mushroom-faced queasiness and mournful precosity. 'You're wasting valuable drinking time,' he warns the audience when it applauds for an encore, adding 'off he goes for a well-earned fruit juice' as Sir Joseph Porter leaves the stage. But when the cast sings that Ralph resisted all temptations to belong to lesser nations, and remains an Englishman, against a background either of a vast Union Jack or of a sort of stained-glass darts board embossed with bits of Queen Victoria — well, maybe the evening becomes just a little more than jaunty and sportive: a gleeful V-sign, you might say, aimed at our imperial pomposity.

'I was brought up in Chorley,' he says. 'You mean someone puked, and there you were?' she amiably inquires. For better or worse or both, that's pretty characteristic of Jim Hitchmough's **Watching**, which is at the Bush on furlough from Liverpool Playhouse. It's a two-hander describing the emotional awakening of an earnest young birdwatcher by a streetwise Scouse girl. Her endless quips and jokes — describing his motor-bike as a 'spluttering roller-skate', sneaking Smarties into his gloves — simultaneously madden, fascinate and change him. By the end, he's a lot less prim and she just a bit more serious, for all her compulsive prankishness.

I laughed at the more inventive exchanges — 'I've got a canvas stool,' 'Have you mentioned it to your doctor?' — and admired the resilience of the performers, Adam Kotz and Cheryl Maiker. There's no doubt of their talent, or indeed that of Hitchmough himself. But the relentless celebration of a relentless Scouseness does begin to pall after a time and the theme, for all the energy of its handling, isn't exactly original. At base, this is *Educating Rita*, plus tent, binoculars and encyclopedia of British birds. □

TELEVISION

Rock of ages

Hugo Williams

ONE OF THE 'BEST comic talents in Britain today' (*Radio Times*) taking part in the charity show **Comic Relief** recorded at the Shaftesbury Theatre for *Omnibus* (BBC1) was heavy-weight hopeful Frank Bruno, playing Juliet to Lenny Henry's Romeo. He didn't really have the weight for the part, but he might have done something with his famous catchphrase — 'O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo, Ya-know-wha'mean?' — if Henry hadn't stolen his wind by playing Romeo as Frank Bruno himself, ya-know-wha'mean? For a moment the cultural layering was complex, if not profound, and a knockout, however unlikely, looked like the only way of getting Juliet amusingly off stage.

The traditional marriage of charity and embarrassment continued with Rowan Atkinson as Barry Manilow singing a duet with Kate Bush as herself. As Kate chirrupped, 'He looked like a rich man down on his luck, so I charged him a fortune for a flying . . . crying out loud,' the entertainment value was almost imperceptible among all the displacement activity and goodwill. Never mind, Rory Bremner is funny even when impersonating sports commentators you've never heard of — probably because you've never heard of them — while Coe and Ovett put on a gory version of their youthful rivalry round the stalls of the Shaftesbury. Among such concert-party improvisation, Rik Mayall — 'Do you love me? (yeah yeah), Do you like my bottom?' — seemed almost professional. I love his winsome audience chat-up — 'What? What's going on?' — and, when the other Young Ones joined him — 'We haven't even told our parents what time we'll be back' — you realised how much of their success they owed to him. We were promised the tragic Newsround announcer John Craven as Cliff stand-in for their Current *Living Doll* cover, but unfortunately Cliff himself made it across the road from the Dominion and we were back to any-old-thing with too much applause afterwards. 'Whenever we appear it's the end of something,' said organisers Midge Ure and Bob Geldof, not before time.

Cliff could be seen doing his original seminal Elvis impersonation again on a watchable half-hour scrap-book, **The Rock 'n' Roll Years** (BBC1) — 1958 this time. As the decades roll by, even his earliest hits start to look more and more like showbiz pastiche, no different from Johnny Halliday's really, alongside contemporary American acts like Buddy Holly or Danny and the Juniors, all skilfully collaged here to lesser events of the period such as America's first Earth satellite: 'Goodness Gracious, Great Balls of Fire!' In fact, on this evidence, the only British rocker who had the faintest idea of what was going on was Lonnie Donnegan, who showed himself able to express as much in a lightning interview. Let's hope they dig up (no pun)

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SS7

New Statesman

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some Johnny Kidd to save our face next week.

Just how far and how soon and how happily Elvis too had drifted from the music by 1965 could be seen in **Girl Happy** (BBC2). Presley's dyed hair and eyelashes and his satiny blouses perfectly corresponded to the whole crispy-poolside-pink-flamingoes culture being optimistically (but cheaply) promoted to shore up American 'innocence' as England took hold of it by the scruff of the neck. Only two years after Elvis and his girlfriends warbled an anachronistic 'Spring is here' (it wasn't) from back-projected convertibles and perms, the Stones-saturated and autumnal Velvet Underground were voicing the other side of the American coin, 'Hey, white boy! What you doing uptown?'

'Since I don't really believe in painting any more,' said a pre-death-mask Andy Warhol in an archive clip probably found by Mary Harron for a rake-over of the band on the **South Bank Show** (ITV), 'I sort of thought ... anyway, the whole thing's being auditioned tomorrow morning at nine ...' Trust Warhol to call a press call an audition! The band was already fully-together or Warhol wouldn't have noticed it, but, 'within three weeks of meeting them,' said biographer Victor Bockris, 'he had them playing every night at The Dome in St Mark's Place.' 'He turned everything into gold,' agreed Velvets singer Nico.

Themselves now spiritual sponsors of a thousand garage imitators and student record collections, if not an entire culture, the Velvets only came to most people's understanding via David Bowie's 1971 album *Hunky Dory*, in particular 'Queen Bitch' which had 'Some v.u. white light returned with thanks' against it in the liner notes. Since then the band, which soon became Lou Reed's backing group, has had it all its own way, although Nico's claim that the Sixties led straight into the Eighties musically seemed to deny everyone else's claim that the Velvets had invented Punk. (Surely no punk ever had so many offers of parentage?)

Nico had been studying with Marilyn Monroe — 'very exciting!' — at Lee Strasberg's acting school and was introduced to Warhol by Bob Dylan. Her subsequent cult status is due almost entirely to three songs she sang on the group's first and best album. With a female drummer, Moe Tucker, providing its characteristic shambling-monotonous throb, the Velvet Underground was arguably the first woman-dominated rock band. 'I had no drum training whatever,' said Moe, 'I just bashed away. I would concentrate on just playing the same beat so that wherever everyone else went off to ... when they came back I'd still be there, holding it together.'

The SBS found some splendid period footage of languid Factory parties to set the group's brief trajectory in context and old Sixties hands will have spotted Edie Sedgwick, Susan Sontag and, of course, Gerard Malanga. We were given brief clips of West Coast love-ins and niceness to signal the split culture that started in 1967, but, as guitarist Sterling Morrison pointed out, the uniquely depraved feeling of songs like 'Venus in Furs' would carry little shock-value today if it were not so shocking *musically*. □

Fellow Travellers

Huw Richards

SPORTS journalism's cliché-mongers will be on overtime this weekend when Castleford meets Hull Kingston Rovers in the Rugby League Cup Final at Wembley.

Just as Welsh teams have always to come from the 'Valleys' and, by implication, be composed of miners and steelworkers, so rugby league is still viewed as a primitive northern folk-rite played out against Lowryesque landscapes. As one observer recently commented, 'It's strange that the TV cameras always manage to pick up the guy in the crowd in a cloth cap and muffler who looks as though he's strayed out of a John Smith's Bitter advert.'

This isn't only to confuse *Coronation Street* with reality; it's also to ignore a sub-species, the southern rugby league fan, whose enthusiasm is such that *Open Rugby* magazine's apocryphal humorist Arthur 'Ardbottom has commented: 'I've heard that some coaches show their players *Rambo* to get them psyched up. Fulham fans could get enthusiastic watching *Bambi*.'

Some southern league fans are transplanted northerners continuing to enjoy a game they've known since childhood. But most are southerners who'd not seen league live until Fulham started six years ago. Bob Evans, now a Fulham official, remembers his first game: 'I went to a game on my way home from playing a Sunday morning soccer match in West London. I'd never seen anything so fast, exciting or committed. At the end I resented the fact that there were only 80 minutes, not the 90 I was used to.' Bobby Charlton said that he felt overpaid and underworked when he watched league.

As long as rugby union and league are played, fans will debate their relative merits. But there's no doubt that league currently has the better of it. Union had its Golden Age in the 1970s, inspired by creative rule changes and symbolised by a great Welsh side. Still, at its best, a game of greater fluency and subtlety, it currently risks stagnation. Defenders have learnt to plug the gaps created by rule changes and kickers predominate. The ball has been in play for less than 20 minutes out of 80 in some recent internationals. League's beneficial rule changes came two years ago, in the wake of a brilliant standard-setting Australian side. Some matches, like last year's epic Wembley final, see an hour of their 80 minutes in fast-flowing handling action. Few, if any, games are ruined by continuous hoofing into touch.

So Fulham, formed in 1980, started at a good time. But its history has been, to put it mildly, chequered: twice promoted, twice relegated and twice on the point of collapse. Casual fans have deserted. The first year average attendance was 6,096 — fourth highest in the game. Today it is about 1,000 — but the bedrock is an extraordinary reserve of commitment and dedication.

Hardest of the hard core are the 'Travellers' — a group of about 90 who follow Fulham to all away games, to Batley, Rochdale, Whitehaven, enduring endless coach journeys. They're typified by Supporters Club Chair Ron Snares, a cheerfully down-to-earth builder from Dagenham who'd never seen a game until 1980 and now acts as travel agent, shop manager, programme columnist and committee member. He claims to fit in building in his rare spare time.

They've come into their own since the club left Fulham FC's Craven Cottage. Supporters don't simply go to games. They do everything in the club except playing, stewarding and covering losses. When the club moved to the dilapidated Polytechnic Stadium at Chiswick, a group of 50 fans gave up their weekends all summer to carry out the substantial reconstruction and refurbishment needed.

Fulham FC, which ran the club for its first four years, never appreciated the importance of the fans. It refused to recognise the Travellers, excluded fans from the bar where players socialised after the game and made it clear that their only function was to pay at the gate. As they've since shown similar contempt for their soccer following — selling good, young players from a team little short of the First Division only three years ago, to the extent that they've just dropped into the Third, and angling for the chance to sell their much-loved ground as building land — perhaps we shouldn't be surprised. But it also points up a difference between soccer and league.

Ron Snares says that league is a 'working man's game'. That applies as much to the players as the supporters and contributes to the way that Fulham players, fans and management all mix and socialise happily together.

As part-time professionals, league players stay close to the communities that support and produce them. Hunter Davies's study of Spurs revealed the star footballer as a declassé figure — detached, like pools winners, by income from his working-class origins and by background from people with comparable incomes. League players stay with their roots. Kevin Beardmore, Castleford's hooker, is a rugby hero on Sunday, but a miner and Arthur Scargill supporter in the week. The summer of 1984 found him with Great Britain in Australia, but before and after he was with other pitmen on the picket lines. Fulham fans include no miners and, I suspect, few Scargill fans, but that rapport based on genuine identification is there. It received vivid expression when the club was on the point of closure in mid-March. Then the players played for nothing and paid their own expenses for the match at Huddersfield as a gesture to the loyalty of their followers.

The game is only part of the appeal and the enjoyment — a fact neatly summarised by Sandra Barlow, one of the few among Fulham's fans originally from the north, as supporters massed in the bar at Huddersfield before what seemed certain to be the last game: 'There are a lot of people here with whom I've nothing in common but Fulham, but they're the best and dearest friends I've got. And that's what we'll lose if it's all over.' □

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Weekend competition

No 2922 Set by Belle R. Welling

Wendy Cope's collection *Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis* is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Compers are asked to provide their own poems to fit that title. Max. 14 lines. By 15 May.

No 2919 Set by E. O. Parrott

Extracts from lectures by comedians-turned-dons.

Report By Di Dact

A difficult task at which the whole class, for once, worked well and conscientiously. Highly commended: Gerard Benson's Frankie Howerd; John Sweetman's Stanley Unwin; Alison Prince's Victoria Wood; Basil Ransome-Davies's Tony Hancock; Watson Weeks's Al Read and Noel Petty's Max Miller. Originality award (non-renumerative) to Martin Brown for his Harpo Marx; utter tastelessness prize (ditto) to Susie Hooper for her Bernard Manning; gold cup (notional) for brevity to Vin Arthey whose Jimmy Wheeler dealt with Oedipus in five words (no, you'll just have to guess). Top marks and £10 each for the specimens printed below.

Billy Connolly

Today's intellectual bevvy is 'Keats and Structuralism'. Any unsolicited interpolations and I'll interpolate the fuckin heid on you — what us literary chappies call Deconstruction. Right? Consider, if yeez will, the title: 'On first looking into Chapman's Homer.' Now half of youse huvny a fuckin scooby doo what that means. But your average punter — nae problem! He knows a homer is a job done for cash — nae tax, nae problem. Right? So this is some government shite's dossier on this poor punter called Chapman. Right? See, he dizny know Homer's some auld fuckin poet — but he's still right. Right?

TOM DONNELLY

Tommy Cooper

This fellow came up to Wordsworth, he said, is that an iambic pentameter? Wordsworth said, No, it's only got three feet. The fellow said, Why? He said, I'm building a yard out back, dot, dot, dot. The fellow said, Morse code? He said, No, I'm looking for my sister. Wordsworth went to the doctor, he said, I want scanning. The doctor said, You're the one with stress problems. Wordsworth said, iamb. He said, Are you? He said, What's Lucy's secret? Wordsworth said, Metre. Later, Wordsworth met a local. He said, Is this the Wye? The local said, Why? He said, No — Wye. The local said, I know it well. So Wordsworth said, Look — Tintern Abbey. The local said, Yes, 'tis.

WILL BELLENGER

Tony Hancock

Now look here, Madam, I didn't get up on this platform to model clothes. I've spent ten minutes tearing my soul out on the subject of art history, and you're criticising my tie. It's hand painted . . . no, that is *not* egg-yolk. It's ochre. Ochre, a pigment used by artists of yore. Da Vinci and — and Mozart . . . I beg your pardon? . . . He painted in his spare time, very talented . . . Music? Oh, that was just a filler, paid the rent. He may have stroked the ivories for a living but he had a heart of pure canvas . . .

LISSA EVANS

Alexei Sayle

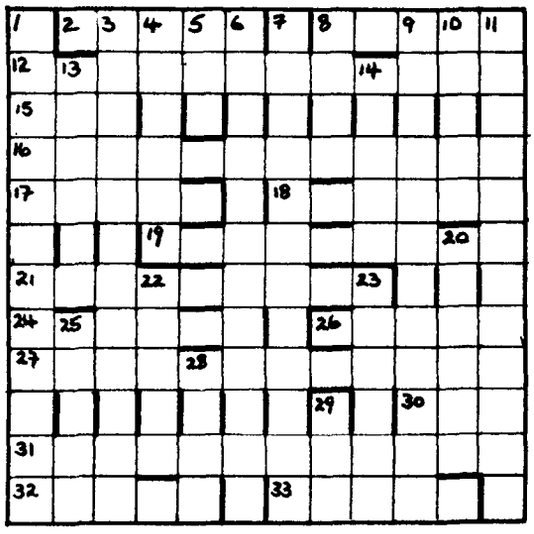
There was this right get, like, called T. S. Eliot. Yeah, don't suppose he sat down and watched *Brookside* or any *crap* like that. Probably read fuckin' French poetry till it came out of his ears so that trendies in Stoke Newington could ponce around St Katherine's Dock saying: 'Oh, how perceptive he was about the dissociation of sensibility. Personally, I adore Laforgue.' Cak! Cak! Cak! Who reads fuckin' French Symbolists in Bootle, eh? Eh? I don't suppose they go down Upper Parliament Street saying, 'Excuse me, officer, me and my friend have just been watching the yellow smoke rubbing its back on the window panes.' The copper just cracks them over the head with a truncheon and says, 'You're nicked you black bastards!' Eh? Eh?

NICHOLAS MURRAY

Salamanca 107

'Oliver'

PRIZE: £35 cheque for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Salamanca 107, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 3 June.



All answers must be treated in either of two suggested ways.

Name_____

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ACROSS

2 What lives (with signs of secrecy) at bottom of garden? (5)
8 Experience when no longer woolly? (5)
12 Wicked, lacking aspiration, had a deep lapse: fruit of Sodom? (3 words, 12)
15 Certainly they see when uncovered (3)
16 Oddly enough a pure one is of mixed origin (8)
17 What's nice on top of cafe do followers say? (5)
18 Alchemical substance: it forms a salient mass contained (6)
19 This insect could be bluish e.g. around rear end (9)
21 Loves fur madly — must get latest in fitch — is too well off? (9)
24 This gene, employing copper, may produce a cellule (6)
26 End of poem, see, in Old English form (5)
27 The sound of metal touching edge of glass? (4)
30 Produced a gun dog from the back (3)
31 Remove obstruction in duct's opening (6)
32 Feature of fruit machine say: you can get money from one using this after spin? (5)
33 Notices always screened but no longer every 24 hours (5)

DOWN

1 I say you should get this (3) . . .
3 . . . secretive fellow who would be silly without work (3)
4 In the charts they rise with first success (number one record making entry) (6)
5 Grub consisting mostly of greens (3)
6 E.g. Falstaff taking two cups, say, and five at a party (7)
7 Destroys Slavic people that are less weak (4)
8 Fragrant flowers (not opening, but new) (4)
9 Young Boer perhaps is something of a mixture (5)
10 Small anchors with no forepart for cutters (5)
11 They may cause dread (you'll find more than one in lush grasses) (6)
13 Money mother frugally saved up for book (6)
14 Lay them on the bottom of the sea (5)
20 Indian money found in front parts of theatre: where's it held now? (6)
22 Part of cam showing faulty weld by end of wheel (5)
23 Very, very? Extremes of light appearing in a bog? (2 words, 6)
25 Old hinge found between dodgem and electrical supply (5)
28 Left out of some fine arguments (4)
29 Involuntary reaction can get you at times (3)

Solution to Salamanca 106

M	O	P	D	T	O	G	U	E	S	U
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W	I	N	D	T	U	N	N	E	L	S
A	B	A	D	E	G	G	U	R	L	R
S	I	N	D	T	U	O	T	T	E	R
T	I	N	D	E	R	N	H	O	T	R
U	L	I	D	T	A	G	A	D	I	R
V	I	L	D	E	M	O	T	H	A	R
W	M	E	D	T	I	N	C	A	N	S
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
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New Statesman

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Applicants should provide a CV and may, if they wish, also send in a brief outline of their ideas for the magazine under their editorship. Those who are included on any shortlist for interview will be asked at a later stage to put in a fuller paper setting out their proposals.

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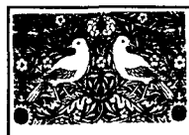

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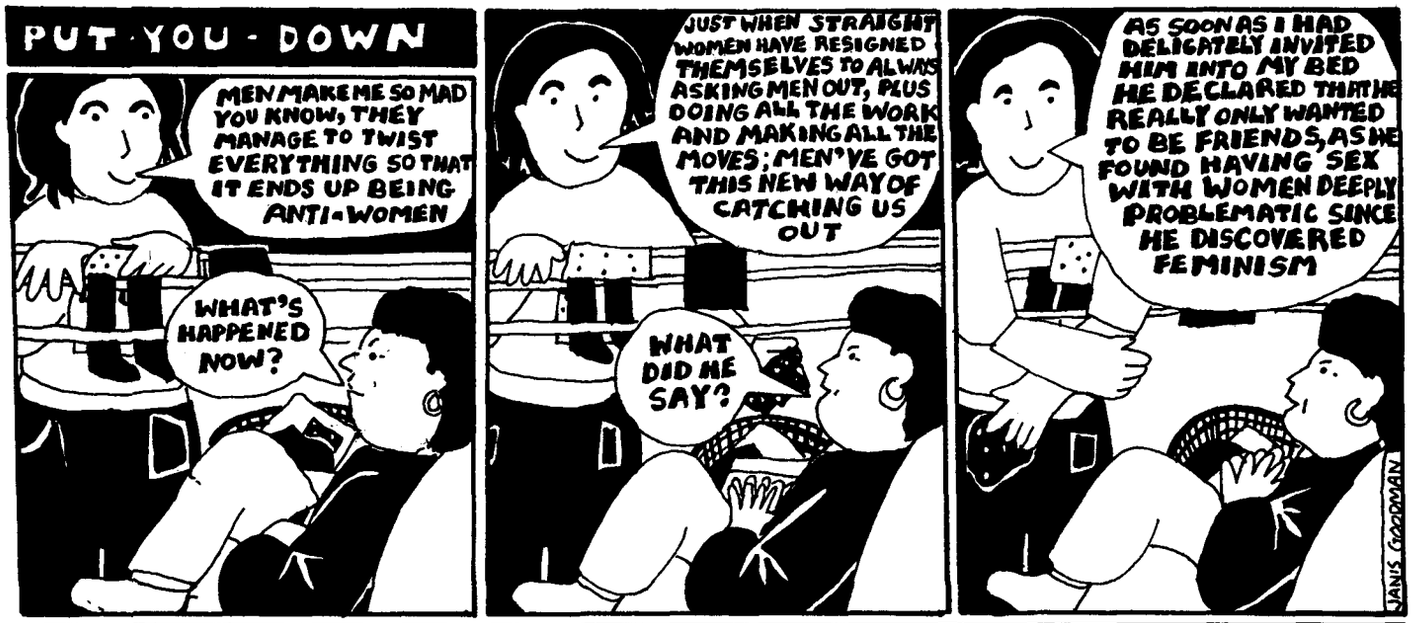
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MEN MAKE ME SO MAD YOU KNOW, THEY MANAGE TO TWIST EVERYTHING SO THAT IT ENDS UP BEING ANTI-WOMEN
WHAT'S HAPPENED NOW?
JUST WHEN STRAIGHT WOMEN HAVE RESIGNED THEMSELVES TO ALWAYS ASKING MEN OUT, PLUS DOING ALL THE WORK AND MAKING ALL THE MOVES; MEN'VE GOT THIS NEW WAY OF CATCHING US OUT
WHAT DID HE SAY?
AS SOON AS I HAD DELICATELY INVITED HIM INTO MY BED HE DECLARED THAT HE REALLY ONLY WANTED TO BE FRIENDS, AS HE FOUND HAVING SEX WITH WOMEN DEEPLY PROBLEMATIC SINCE HE DISCOVERED FEMINISM
JANIS GOODMAN

CHESS

THERE IS no doubt that the standard of British chess has risen very steeply in the past decade. Can we expect further advances? And in particular can a serious challenge to Russian supremacy be mounted in the Olympiads and the individual world championship? The excellent performance of the home players in the GLC International certainly encouraged an optimistic view, but Oakham School's junior international earlier this month produced rather sobering results. Whereas English players took four of the top five places in the GLC, only James Howell and Mark Condie (of Scotland — I don't think Mark would like people to mistake him for a Sassenach!) of the home competitors finished in the top five at Oakham. Howell, a 19 year-old from Yorkshire, took the silver medal in the European junior championships at Groningen at the beginning of the year and is one of the brightest prospects. But there was a rather ominous aspect to the Groningen results. It was the USSR representative, Khalifman, who took the gold medal, winning his first 8 games on the reel and finishing a full 2 points ahead of Howell.

A candid assessment would probably be that we cannot expect to match the Russians until we match their level of professional support. People often ask whether it is possible for a British player to be a chess professional nowadays. Yes, if you are strong enough, it is. But that is really only part of the picture. The leading Soviet players are not just full-time professionals themselves, they have full-time professional helpers.

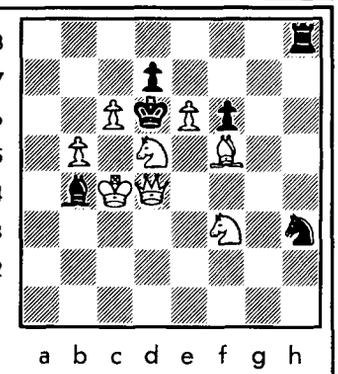
The British Chess Federation has certainly not overlooked the importance of coaching. Under the guidance of Bob Wade, the chief national coach, and the National Junior Training Committee, a network of regional coaches has been established, and each month a training event will be held for promising juniors somewhere in the country. This is a gallant and productive enterprise, but shortage of resources means that the effort has to be concentrated at the junior level, leaving those who have graduated from this stage to their own devices. In contrast, Soviet counterparts of Short and Howell have their own personal mentors.

The ideal coach would be, amongst other things, a strong player who has retired from front-line competition. One such is John Littlewood, a national junior coach, and a stylist of attacking flair, as you can see from this game played in the Legal & General Club Championship:

Horner-J. Littlewood, Bolton v Atherton 1986. Ruy Lopez. 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Nf6 4. Qe2 Bc5 5. c3 0-0 6. Bxc6 White plays to win the Black e-pawn and gets a pawn more and a worse position than he bargained for. **bxc6 7. Nxe5 d6! 8. d4 Bb6 9. Nxc6 Qd7 10. Nb4 Re8 11. f3 a5 12. Nd3 Ba6 13. 0-0 c5 14. Be3 Nd5!** Littlewood exploits the pins to break open the game for his more active pieces. **15. Rd1 f5! 16. dxc5 fxe4 17. fxe4 Rxe4 18. cxb6 Rxe3 19. Qh5 Qe6** The threat of penetration to e1 decides the game. **20. Nd2 Rxd3 21. Nf3 Nf4 22. Qxh7+ Kxh7 23. Ng5+ Kg6 24. Nxe6 Nxe6 25. Rxd3 Bxd3 26. Rd1 Nf4 27. g3 Nh3+ 28. Kg2 Be4+ 29. Kxh3 Kg5 30. g4 Kf4 0-1.**

Problem

A rather special one this time, as the diagram is the problem that you have to solve in order to qualify for the 1986 Lloyds Bank British Solving Championship. Those submitting correct solutions move on to a more testing postal stage which will sort out who qualifies for the final, to be held in London in January 1987. Prizes in the final are £100, £50, and £25, with the winner receiving both a trophy and the opportunity to represent Britain in the 1987 world solving championship.



The task is to find how White plays and mates in two against any defence. To enter send your solution (just White's first move) to **Lloyds Bank Sponsorship, Princess House, 152-156 Upper Thames Street, London EC4** by 1 July. And please mark your solution *New Statesman*.

George Botterill

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☐ To reflect an important change of emphasis, the council has agreed to disband its Finance and Policy Committee and replace it, for a six month trial period, by a Policy and Finance Committee. — *Arts Council of Great Britain Bulletin* (Rosemary Bennett)

☐ We are about to build a new Hooper Bentley, the Empress. It is aimed at the 30 to 45 age group, the type of people who wouldn't buy a traditional Rolls. The price is going to be £185,000. — *Observer Colour Magazine* (H. M. Tooby)

☐ Mr Norman Tebbit complained yesterday that local elections are unfair on the Conservatives because the results are 'slanted' by poor people who have votes but do not pay rates. — the *Guardian* (Nigel Smith)

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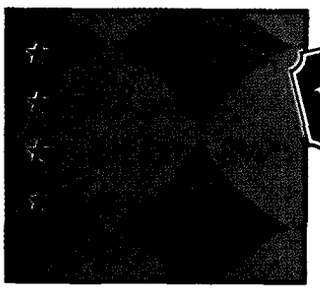

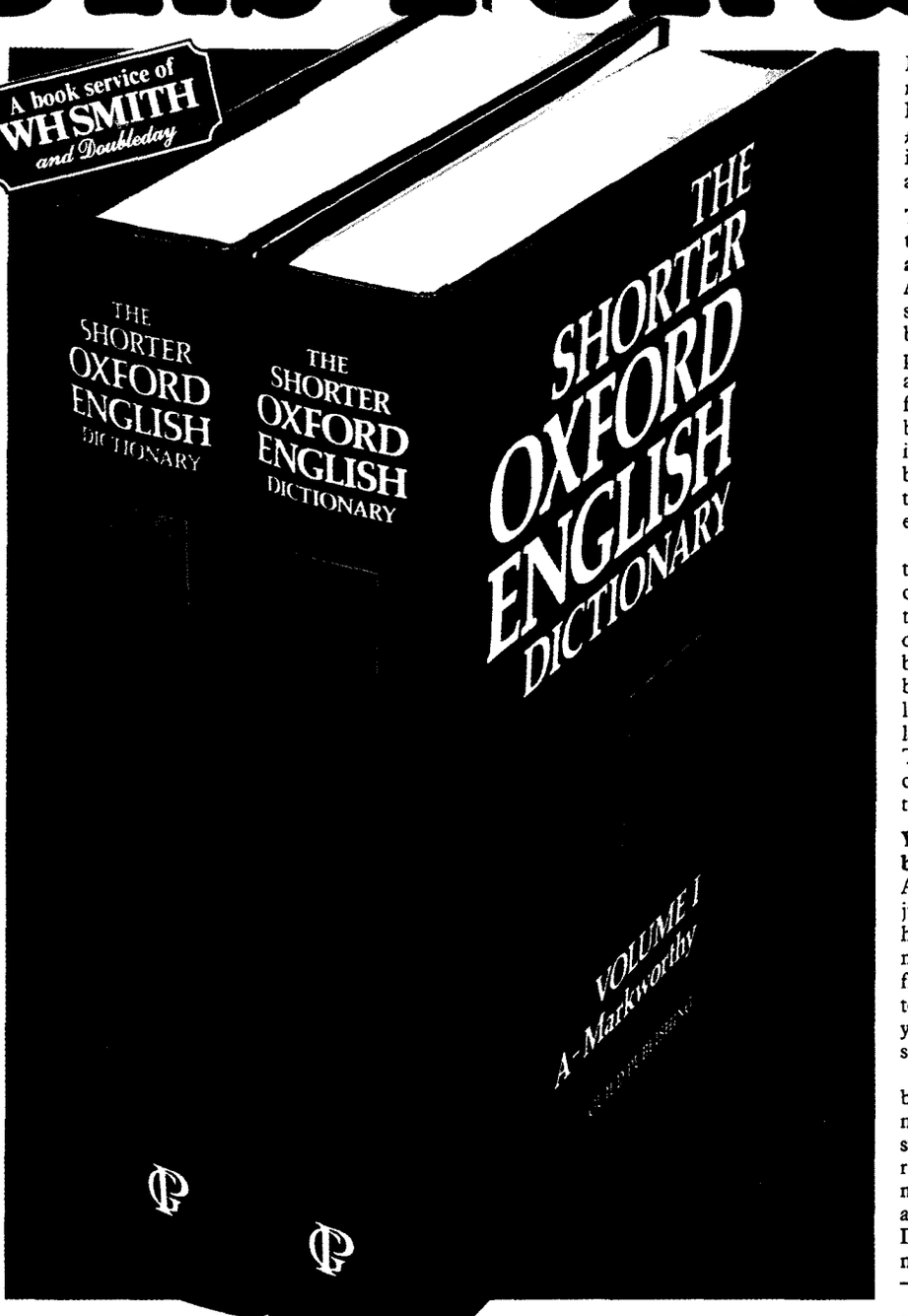

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